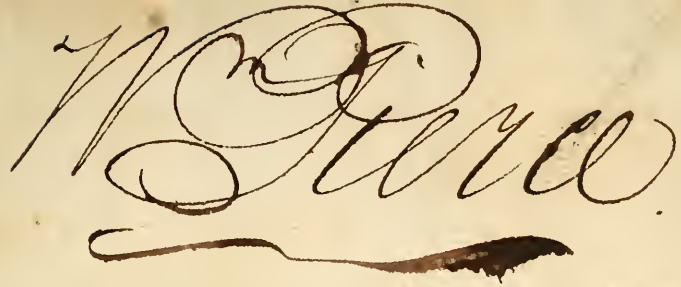
Old Dutch Church
1656-1715
Old St Peter's Church
1715
MRS. JOHN V. L. PRUYN



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A

TRUE AND FAITHFUL ACCOUNT

OF THE

# ISLAND OF VERITAS;

TOGETHER WITH THE

## FORMS OF THEIR LITURGY;

AND A FULL RELATION OF THE

## *RELIGIOUS OPINIONS*

OF THE

## VERITASIANS,

AS DELIVERED IN SEVERAL SERMONS

JUST PUBLISHED IN VERITAS.

LONDON:

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# PREFACE.

EVERY perſon, who publiſhes, is account-able to the world for the work he ſub-mits to its peruſal.

The writer of the following hiſtory is my particular friend, and has generally ſent me a faithful relation of whatever he has diſ-covered worthy of notice.

We were brought up together—our tempers diſpoſitions and purſuits were very ſimilar; and altho' the employment he is engaged in ſeparates us more frequently than we could wiſh, yet it tends to our mutual advantage; becauſe our reciprocal communications have always the improvement of the other for their end.

He ſailed the beginning of laſt year from Boſton, in America, upon an expedition to the ſouthward, and was to refreſh at Botany Bay,——I was very anxious for his ſafety, as I had not heard any thing of him for an unuſual length of time; but my fears were diſſipated by the arrival of the Lion, which brought me a packet, containing the follow-ing hiſtory, as well as a letter, of which this is an abſtract.

*My Dear Friend,*

" A circumſtance that made me fear I " ſhould never ſee you again, has been the " means of bringing me acquainted with a " moſt happy people."

*(He then relates having been Ship-wrecked.)*

" Some particulars of the Iſland we were " caſt upon I have encloſed——You are at " liberty to publiſh them, becauſe I am really " in a ſtate of uncertainty, whether the opinions " you will find therein contained are falſe or " true

" I feel myſelf almoſt converted to their " way of thinking: but nevertheleſs I know " not if the Veritaſians are right, how it has " happened that the Learned in England have " permitted the world to remain ſo long in " an error of ſuch magnitude.

" Perhaps this hiſtory may occaſion ſome " controverſy, if it ſhould, do you be ſo good " as to collect for me every thing pro and con " that may be publiſhed before I return; " when you and I will unbiaſſedly examine " them, and endeavour to diſcover what is " truth.

" You may at all events ſell my Yorkſhire
" eſtate, becauſe I am determined, if it pleaſe
" God to ſpare my life, to purchaſe a ſhip,
" freight it with ſuch things as may be uſeful
" in Veritas, and get myſelf admitted as one
" of its citizens,——could I prevail on you
" and Mrs. Freeman to accompany me, my
" pleaſure would be greatly encreaſed, and
" your good lady would be delighted with the
" virtuous ſimplicity of this people.

" The Lion is getting under way—I have
" only to add that I will not forget to ſend
" you an account of Botany Bay as ſoon as
" poſſible——I hope to be at home about
" next Chriſtmas."

*Am, &c. &c.*

*Your ſincere Friend,*

JASPER RICHARDSON.

In conformity with the foregoing, I have publiſhed this hiſtory, and I beg the Learned of this nation to take the trouble of refuting whatever errors may be found in the opinions of the Veritaſians, for from thence this benefit will be derived, that when my friend

*Jaſper* goes next to the Iſland of Veritas, he will take with him ſuch refutations, which, if they are convincing, will bring the Veritaſians to a knowledge of the errors which they are in at preſent.

Either we or they are in an error, and which ever it is, mankind in general will be benefited in having this matter elucidated.

I ſhall be greatly obliged to all perſons who may read this book, if they will favor me with their ſentiments upon it, by letter addreſſed to me at the publiſhers, who am, with all truth,

*Their very humble Servant,*

Padderton,
Yorkſhire.

NILEKAW FREEMAN,

*To the Reviewers.*

GENTLEMEN,

I am permitted to lay before you a ſhort hiſtory of a nation, which my friend has diſcovered, inhabiting an iſland in the ſouthern hemiſphere.

I have given an abſtract of his letter, which accompanied it, and I think I beſt anſwer his intention when I make the requeſt, that you will critically and ſeverely examine the opinions delivered in the diſcourſes of the Veritaſian prieſts.

The hiſtorical part is written, as you will perceive, by a perſon, not perhaps capable of producing any work ſufficiently elegant for the publick's entertainment; but a ſimple ſtatement of facts is as ſatisfactorily received from a ſailor, whoſe truth is undoubted, as from the moſt perfect writer.

Ever ſince I have read his manuſcript, I have felt myſelf very much intereſted in having theſe opinions thoroughly examined; and I doubt not but ſhould any of our divines think it would be proper to endeavour to convert this people, that, by refuting and proving the falſity, and irrationality of the Veritaſian doctrines, in a clear and argumentative manner, they would obtain their end; becauſe all the Veritaſians are remarkably open to conviction.

Would you likewiſe, Gentlemen, in a ſhort but clear manner point out their errors, it would greatly oblige

*Your very humble Servant,*

NILEKAW FREEMAN.

# THE HISTORY OF THE ISLAND OF VERITAS.

THE Iſland of Veritas is about three hundred miles long, and one hundred and fifty broad, the ſoil in general fertile, and the views pictureſque:——Nature ſeems to have been partial in producing in this delightful ſpot, all the beauties which are admired in the reſt of the earth.

This Iſland received its name from an European, Jacobus Veritas;——he was a man of the ſtricteſt principles of honor, and his actions always marked the honeſt man; but diſpleaſed with the vices of the people amongſt whom he was born, and differing from them in his

opinions, he reſolved to travel round the world, and acquaint himſelf with other nations, intending to ſettle whereſoever he ſhould find mankind moſt virtuous and happy.

In the courſe of his voyages he landed upon the Iſland of Veritas, and from a ſuperſtitious cuſtom of the people, was choſen their governor or king: Finding their manners ſimple, their tempers docile, their genious quick and inquiſitive, he determined to put in force the ſcheme he had entertained from his youth; and on his *Death-bed* he had the ſatisfaction of knowing himſelf beloved by a nation, whoſe happineſs was received from him.

He died much lamented, in the 91ſt year of his age, after a reign of 60 years:—his ſubjects have raiſed to his memory a very elegant monument, which, according to his will, has no other epitaph than the following.

HERE
WERE BURIED THE REMAINS
OF
JACOBUS VERITAS,
*Ætatis Suæ*, 91.
HE WAS A MAN
WHO BELIEVED
*IN GOD*,
AND ENDEAVOURED TO MAKE
THE GOODNESS
OF
THE ONE SUPRIME
KNOWN
TO ALL MANKIND.

Every act of his reign remains engraven on the hearts of the Veritasians, who speak of him with the highest veneration.

He planned their present form of government, which consists of King, Lords and Commons, with all the principal regulations that are now in force.

*Of the King of Parliament:*

The crown is elective, and the following is their regulation for the election.

'As soon as the soul of a king shall, by the pleasure 'of the Almighty God, be permitted to leave this earth, 'the lord in waiting shall give notice thereof to the 'chancellor, who shall forthwith summons the parlia-

' ment to meet in the palace :—The commons ſhall then
' depute ten of their members to go with the chancel-
' lor to inſpect the body,—when finding that the king did
' die a natural death, they ſhall make report thereof to the
' lords, who ſhall immediately proceed to elect, out of
' their own body, two perſons to be returned to the com-
' mons, for them to chuſe one of them to be king.

' Upon the choice being made, the lords and commons
' ſhall ſwear allegiance to their king; and ſhall take care
' that information be ſent to every part of the realm, of
' whom they have elected.'

The privileges which the king enjoys are exactly the ſame as thoſe of the king of Great Britain, except where otherwiſe ordered by particular laws.

It was conſidered by the founder of this government, that perhaps, as the ſovereign was to be choſen from the lords, a conſpiracy might ſometime be formed to deſtroy a future king, in order to promote a favorite of their own body;—the law therefore provides, that ' In caſe the ex-
' amining committee from the commons, ſhall report
' that a malicious violence was the cauſe of the king's
' death, the chancellor ſhall then diſſolve the parliament;
' a new one ſhall be choſen by the people, and from this
' new parliament ſhall a king be elected, who ſhall be
' enthroned by the chancellor.

' The king ſhall immediately direct the parliament to

' proceed to the election of the lords, and the chancellor ' ſhall inform the people of whom they have elected. *

Their title of lord is for a year, and ſignifies merely a lord of parliament.

The number of the lords is two hundred, but as they are only a ſeparation from the commons, I will proceed to ſpeak of the nature of electing the commons.

The whole Iſland is divided into one hundred diviſions or counties,——each county is divided into one hundred pariſhes, and all perſons who have attained the age of twenty-one years have a right to vote.

Every county has a ſheriff, to whom the chancellor ſends orders to return ſix members for his county. Upon receiving theſe orders, the ſheriff directs the miniſter and church-wardens of each pariſh to collect the votes of their pariſhioners, for the appointment of ſix perſons fit and proper to become members of parliament.

Having proceeded to the election, the miniſter and church-wardens make their return to the ſheriff, and at the ſame time ſend to every pariſh in their county, a copy of the return ſo made by them.

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* Although the crown is thus declared elective, yet the Veritaſians have made it a point ever ſince the death of Jacobus, to chuſe that perſon of his family for their king who would have been entitled to the crown had it been hereditary.

Upon receiving the pariſh returns, the ſheriff caſts up the number of the votes for the different candidates, and returns to the chancellor thoſe ſix who have the majority; ſo likewiſe doth each pariſh receive from its officers an account of thoſe perſons upon whom the lot has fallen, whoſe names are painted on a particular part of the church, and remain there the whole year.

This election is annual, and the return is made to the chancellor the laſt week in the old year; the members meet the firſt monday in the ſecond month of the new year, at the parliament houſe: when, after having ſworn allegiance to the king, they proceed to the election of the two hundred lords of parliament, who are then preſented to the king, for him to ſelect a privy council of the number of ſixty; but the whole body of lords meet in a ſeparate houſe, and form a ſeparate ſtate from the commons.

No act of parliament has effect till it has gone through the ſame forms as in the parliament of Great Britain; but further, upon receiving the ſanction of king, lords and commons, it is ſent to a particular committee of the houſe of commons, which prepares an abſtract of the ſame;——this abſtract is returned to the commons for their approbation;—it is then carried to the lords, who, upon giving their aſſent, direct it to be printed and tranſmitted to every pariſh;—it is afterwards copied upon the walls of the church, and the printed abſtract is preſerved.

*Of their Courts.*

There is in each pariſh a court of twelve perſons choſen annually by the reſt of the pariſhioners, ſeven whereof make a court to tranſact buſineſs; they meet every fortnight for the determination of all cauſes of diſpute that have ariſen in the pariſh:—They reduce all the evidence to writing, which is ſworn to by the parties; they give their ſentence in writing, with the reaſons for their verdict; and both the evidence and ſentence is enrolled, and copies are kept by a pariſh regiſter.

If through neglect of proper evidence, or through other cauſes, one party ſhould have reaſon to think that the ſentence of this court is unjuſt, he has a right to apply for relief to the ſheriff of the county; who is then bound to ſend to every pariſh court under his juriſdiction, for them to nominate one of their members to meet him in the chief county town, on a day appointed; there to enquire into and determine the cauſe.

This court of one hundred, or as it is called, the Centum Court, when once choſen, laſts a twelvemonth from the time of its firſt ſeſſions, and meets only once in three months, on a day appointed by itſelf, unleſs ſooner called together by the ſheriff.

This court, in caſe of any doubt, has a right to apply to the council for their advice, ſtating the facts to the council in writing, and confirming them, if neceſſary, by viva voce evidence.

All the courts ſtrictly adhere to the letter of the written law, when there is any law applicable to the caſe; but otherwiſe, they give judgments in equity.

The perſons who are choſen by the pariſh to compoſe the court of the twelve, exerciſe individually the power of the engliſh juſtices of the peace.

The Iſland of Veritas is governed by four ſpecies of courts, at which, every perſon who knows himſelf wronged, may be ſucceſſively heard, and may be ſure of having his complaints redreſſed.

For, in the firſt inſtance, the magiſtrates or individuals of the twelve, have a power of redreſſing many grievances; and their ſentence and conduct are examined into, by their aggregate body, when they next meet;—from this court an appeal lies to the centum;—from thence to the council;—and from the council to the parliament:——But in order to prevent unneceſſary and troubleſome appeals, every court that confirms the former ſentence, has the power of doubling the penalty, which it is expected to do, unleſs there appears to have been ſufficient cauſe to juſtify the appeal.

## *Of the Officers of State.*

All officers of ſtate are appointed by the king, except the chancellor,——the ſheriff,——and the judges.

The Chancellor is the firſt officer of the realm; his appointment is for life, and he has a fixed ſalary, paid by the treaſury: He is made by the lords and commons giving their aſſent to the recommendation of the king.

He is a privy councellor and prolocutor of the lords; and ſits at the right hand of the throne when the privy council are examining the merits of any appeal.

He is the general guardian of all infants, idiots and lunatics: To him is intruſted thoſe extraordinary powers of applying the force of government, to afford that remedy for any ill which could not be given if the injured perſon is obliged to wait for the courſe of the laws: But as ſuch a power might be ſometimes uſed to the injury of ſociety, it was thought neceſſary by Jacobus that it ſhould be intruſted to ſome perſon who might be amenable to the cenſure of the parliament: Yet as from this the king is exempt, upon our principle that a king can do no wrong, ſo on that account the chancellor is inveſted with this power, which in many countries belongs ſolely to the ſovereign.

The public ſeals are given to the cuſtody of the chancellor, but he is not obliged to put the ſeal to any thing he thinks may be injurious to the king, until he has received the direct poſitive orders of the privy council of the lords and of the commons.

He has a court compoſed of himſelf and the judges, which receives annually a regiſter of all the cauſes that have been tried by any of the courts of juſtice, with their judgments; and in caſe that a charge of willful miſconduct brought againſt any of the magiſtrates be proved, this court, with the conſent of the privy council fines the offender.

*Of the Sheriff.*

The next officer in rank and conſequence in the ſtate is the Sheriſh of a county.

Upon the death of a ſheriff, the court of the one hundred is ſummoned by the chancellor, to return to the king three perſons born in the county, who are fit and proper to fill this office.—Of theſe the king chuſes whom he moſt approves.——This office is for three years certain; after which time he is removable either by the will of the king, or by petition from the centum, which petition the king muſt grant.

To this officer are ſent the writs for the election of the members of parliament; and by him is the return made. He has a ſeat at the head of the hundred court.—To him the confirming the ſentences of the court is intruſted, and he has a right to order once, a re-examination of any cauſe which appears doubtful to him.

He has alſo power to command the pariſh courts to enquire into particular abuſes, and to make their report to him.

*Of the Judges.*

The four and twenty judges are appointed by the parliament, at the recommendation of the king, and they hold their offices for the life of the king; their buſineſs is to ſuperintend the framing of laws, taking care that they are ſimple, clear and neceſſary: They alſo explain to the houſes of parliament the meaning and connexion of any of the laws; which explanation, if approved of by the parliament and thought neceſſary, is recorded and added to the former law. They ſit in the houſe of lords, but never give any vote: And have certain ſalaries, payable by the treaſury.

The reſt of the officers of ſtate are appointed by the king, are removable by him whenever he pleaſes, and from him they receive their ſalaries: Two of his principal ſecretaries have ſeats ex officio in the houſe of commons.

*Of the Revenue.*

The expences of government are borne by the parliament, who raiſe the ſupplies neceſſary thereto in the moſt ſimple manner poſſible.

There is neither cuſtom, exciſe, or duty of any kind; for they think that ſuch are hurtful to a ſtate, by rendering it neceſſary to be at the expence of hiring people to collect them; which in the firſt inſtance occaſions a burthen; and alſo, that it is laying a temptation in the way of the fraudulent to injure the honeſt and conſcientious: Of this they ſay they are convinced, by the hiſtories of other nations.

Their method of levying the neceſſary ſupplies is as follows.——The king ſends to the commons, to deſire them to meet him in the houſe of lords; he there briefly ſtates the computed expences of the current year, and leaves them all the vouchers of the application of the laſt ſupplies.———The commons then retire to their own houſe, and one of the ſecretaries of ſtate gives them copies of the vouchers.

The lords and commons ſeparately prepare their opinions of what ſum of money ought to be raiſed by each county; theſe they ſend to each other.——If there is any difference, the commons deſire a conferrence with the lords; at this conferrence five lords are elected by the commons, and five of the commons by the lords, who finally determine the quotas to be raiſed; and in caſe of an equal diviſion on any conteſted point, the king decides.

When all is agreed and ſettled, the commons prepare a bill for levying the neceſſary revenue; and when the bill is paſſed, the chancellor, by the king's order, ſends writs to the ſheriffs, requiring each of them to call together his court of the one hundred, to lay before it the act of parliament, and to require it to raiſe the neceſſaries.——This court proportions the ſum required according to the abilities of its reſpective conſtituent pariſhes, which are bound to ſend their quota within a certain time to the ſheriff, who tranſmits them to the treaſury.

Every officer under goverment has a certain ſalary, no perquiſites being allowed; and failure in integrity is puniſhed in every department with the utmoſt ſeverity.

*Of their Laws.*

Their code of laws is very ſimple.

Their pariſh courts have power of ordering reſtitution to be made for every wrong, but if the convicted party thinks himſelf unjuſtly ſentenced, he may, within ten days, appeal to the ſheriff for a further examination by the centum court, which may either reverſe the ſentence of the pariſh court, or order its being put into immediate execution: If the party does not appeal within the limited time, the pariſh courts have power to proceed to execution.

The Veritaſians puniſh no offence with death; they ſay they have no right to take away life, except in ſelf-defence.

Two benefits they think are deſirable from laws;—— the correction and prevention of wrongs.——Sanguinary laws are known to fail.

Murder they eſteem the moſt atrocious crime, yet they believe they ſhould not be juſtified in taking the life of the murderer; becauſe, as the offence is againſt God, immediate human puniſhment may prevent the effect of repentance, and a ſoul may thereby be deſtroyed.

But as the murderer cannot expect favor from ſociety, they therefore condemn him to perpetual ſolitary im-

priſonment; where, provided with good books, he is left to endeavour to appeaſe his God, for a wrong he can never reinſtate to man.———He has food ſufficient to keep him alive, brought to him once a day, by the goaler, who is forbidden ever to ſpeak to him.

Other crimes are puniſhed with temporary impriſonſonment, the time being proportioned to the offence:—Every man in priſon is kept ſeparate and ſolitary; nor has he an opportunity of ſeeing any body but the perſon who brings his food.

The name of every perſon who is ſent to priſon, is publiſhed in his pariſh church, on the ſunday next after his commitment, with the nature of the offence and the ſentence paſſed upon him.

## *Of Change of Property.*

In the deſcent of property among the Veritaſians, the neareſt relations, whether male or female; or of the whole or half blood, take poſſeſſion of all property in equal ſhares, except where otherwiſe ordered by particular laws.

Their wills require few formalities, becauſe if there be a widow and children, ſhe has a life intereſt in half the property, the reſt being equally divided among the children; and at her death, her ſhare becomes the equal property of all the children; nor can a will alter this ſucceſſion: Where there are no children, a man may

leave one half of his property to whomſoever he pleaſes, the other being his widows, if he leaves one; but this will muſt be atteſted by three witneſſes.

Their conveyance of real eſtates is made by actual livery of ſeizen, which is regiſtered in the hundred court.

The foregoing are the heads of their government and laws, and ſo ſimple is the adminiſtration of juſtice, and ſo well acquainted are all the Veritaſians with the laws, that the offences which are brought before the courts, are as few as can be ſuppoſed; indeed to the excellent regulations of their reſpective pariſhes, are to be attributed their happineſs and virtue.

Mentioning their pariſhes, I am led to take notice of their clergy and their ſchools.

The living of each pariſh is worth about two hundred and fifty pounds a year of our money; this ſum is raiſed by government, with the other expences, and the pariſh officers deduct it from the account they ſend to the ſheriff. —— This is divided into two parts £150 for a miniſter, and £100 for a curate; but both are obliged to reſidence; nor can one clergyman hold two livings. Theſe clergy are elected annually by the pariſh; when they are returned to ſix officers, called inſpectors of the clergy, who go a circuit every year through different diviſions, to inſpect and make their reports to the chancellor.—But when once a clergyman is elected, he cannot

be turned out, nor can another be elected without sufficient reason being given to the inspectors, who, before they admit the new one, must receive the chancellor's assent.

As the clergy enter into the profession with the firm determination of doing their duty, so to them is intrusted the education of all the youth in the parish.———They superintend the schools, and examine that parents teach their children to read their native tongue; they take care that there be always a supply of proper books provided at the expence of the parish, for the use of the children; endeavouring to procure such books as may give them a just knowledge of their own nature, thereby enabling them properly to glorify their creator.*

There are in Veritas ten public schools or colleges, where languages, arts and sciences may be acquired, and a finished education received.——These are attended with some expence to those persons who send their children to them; but the regulations are so excellent, that in them almost all the chief people of the nation have some part of their education, although the parents themselves are the chief instructors of their children.

In these schools they who intend to be clergymen finish their education and receive a certificate of being properly qualified for the duties of their profession, but an immoral man will never be able to

* Every parish also has particular regulations for the employment of its poor—so that in Veritas no man ever complains of being unable to find work.

gain it.——They are very particular in enquiring into the virtue of their clergy, becauſe it is their opinion that the ſociety which admits immoral men into the profeſſorſhip of its religion, muſt be in a very rotten ſtate.

The enquiry whether a man is a virtuous citizen? is with them a matter of great concern; and he who wilfully violates the laws of God and virtue, is ſure to meet the cenſure of the twelve, and to be ſent into temporary confinement.

Every perſon is brought up to ſome buſineſs or employment; for the Veritaſians believe that an idle man can hardly fail of being vicious.

They trade with the utmoſt integrity, and their word is at all times as ſacred as a bond.——They ſeem exceſſively fond of traffick, but ſeldom venture beyond their capital:—They are very frugal and induſtrious, therefore failures are very rare with them; if, however, ſuch by accident ſhould happen, the creditors of the unfortunate meet together and examine his books, and if they find it has been through unavoidable loſſes, they aſſiſt in putting him into trade again; but if avarice, or extravagance have been the cauſe of his error, they deliver him to the twelve for their examination, who, if they think proper, order him into confinement.

They are a lively cheerful people, fond of meetings where the old and young can mix together, and where

the innocent pleaſures of youth are recalled to their minds, by the ſight of the ſame joys in their children.—They condemn the unnatural auſterities, which are practiſed by many nations; they declare that God is good; that he is pleaſed when his creatures are happy, and that all his appointments are wiſe: But nevertheleſs, they acknowledge that man does ſometimes commit actions which are very wrong; yet, this they ſay, proceeds ſolely from his being ignorant of what is right.—When told, that ſome people contend that man is naturally vicious, they deny it, and aſſert, that the errors which other nations give into cannot be attributed to nature, for they are in fact unnatural, as tending to defeat the intentions of God.

It appears extraordinary to them, when they read of men devoting all their time to amaſs gold and jewels, in order that it may be ſaid, they die worth ſo much. Human nature cannot receive any advantage from them after death; yet, to obtain riches, many men are guilty of practices which make them run the greateſt hazard of being miſerable in the future ſtate; for avarice and vanity do not leave them any time to think of what may be their lot hereafter.

Another thing, which appears aſtoniſhing to them, is, that men and women in ſome parts of the world live together merely for the gratification of their appetites; and, that many women gain their living by common proſtitution.

God, they ſay, made man and woman, that they ſhould live together, but ordained, that by their union the ſpecies ſhould be continued.——Connexions therefore, where no iſſue is deſired, cannot be called natural; indeed they are intirely deſtructive of the end intended.

Such never happen with them; they follow the dictates of regulated nature, and turn all their paſſions to a proper and happy courſe. They inſtruct their children in the knowledge of every thing; and particularly in the conſequence of making a proper connexion in order to their future happineſs, to which, virtue is the only guide.

The neceſſaries of life being all they wiſh, are eaſily procured: And the Veritaſians teach their children at an early period to employ themſelves uſefully. Thus, taking away the motives that actuate many nations to delay matrimonial connexions,—their youth ſoon marry, for the parents have ſeldom occaſion to diſſent, becauſe virtue is the chief fortune that is required both by the parents and children. We aſked whether their children had not too early a deſire for marriage? They ſaid, it was very ſeldom the caſe, and even when it was, that it could be turned to the greateſt advantage if the child had been properly educated;—for inſtance, if a ſon ſhould fancy himſelf in love, they generally approved of the perſon upon whom he had ſet his affections, extolled her as much as he could wiſh,—and then pointing

out to him ſome branches of learning, of which he ſtill remained ignorant,—they aſked him whether he could think that he was intitled to marry ſuch a virtuous and accompliſhed woman ?——Adviſed him to ſtudy in all things to oblige her, to gain her affections, and to prove himſelf worthy of her; but before he ſhould venture to aſk a return of her love, to acquaint himſelf with thoſe parts of education of which he was ignorant, and aſſured him that, whenever he ſhould find himſelf deſerving of her, all his parents intereſt ſhould be joined with his, in order that his wiſhes might be gratified.

What ſurprizes them moſt is, that the people who call themſelves chriſtians, who ſay that the moſt high God took upon himſelf our form, ſuffered death upon the croſs, offered up himſelf a ſacrifice to himſelf for the ſins of the world; and who left behind him precepts commanding every virtue:——That theſe ſhould be the people who moſt generally, according to hiſtory, give themſelves up to the errors of avarice and licentious gratifications.

The Veritaſians are ſtrictly virtuous, and are truly religious, although their opinions differ from ours.——They meet in prayer every night and morning in their own families; for ſince God has not forbid their addreſſing him, they aſſert that they ſhould be wrong in neglecting to exerciſe this great privilege of man, even if God would not always hear them; but as they are ſatisfied that he always will hear the prayers

of the humble, they eſteem the honor of being permitted to call upon him as the moſt invaluable of any they enjoy.

Their form of prayer bears a great ſimilitude to ours, and was clearly taken from it by Jacobus; there are ſome trifling alterations which render it ſeemingly more connected, and other grand alterations ariſing from their creed. * I here ſubjoin their form of public ſervice, and ſhall afterwards convey their religious ſentiments through the aſſiſtance of ſome ſermons, which are in the higheſt eſtimation in Veritas.

## MORNING SERVICE.

*Prayer to be uſed by all Perſons upon entering the Church.*

O Almighty and ever merciful God! I beſeech thee to cleanſe my heart from all impurities, and let thy holy ſpirit enable me to render unto thee, a faithful and acceptable ſervice. Amen.

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* I told one of their clergy that I thought they had ſpoiled their firſt pſalm, [our 95th] by altering the beautiful eaſtern mode of expreſſion; and that the harmony of their numbers was no ways equal to the tranſlation, uſed by the church of England; it might be ſo, he ſaid, but he was ſatisfied it was more agreeable to reaſon; and he could not conceive the benefit to be expected from worſhiping God in metaphor.

*The Miniſter ſhall addreſs the People as follows.*

O Come, let us worſhip the lord: let us heartily rejoice in the ſtrength of our ſalvation.

Let us come before his preſence with thankſgiving: and ſhew ourſelves devoted unto him.

For the lord is a great god: and a great king over all creation.

The ſea is his, and he made it: his power prepared the dry land.

O come, let us worſhip, and fall down: and kneel before the lord our maker.

For he is the lord our god: and we ought always to offer unto him our unfeigned thankſgivings.

To day if you will render him acceptable ſervice, harden not your hearts: as we read, that the Jews did in the provocation and in the day of temptation in the wilderneſs; when, as their hiſtorians inform us, they tempted him and ſaw his greatneſs.

Forty years long did they wander in the wilderneſs; and proved that they were a people who did err in their hearts, for they did not know his ways.

Yet, he bore with their ſins; and had mercy on their tranſgreſſions:

And permitted them to enter the land which, according to the bible, was flowing with milk and honey.

*Let us Praiſe God.*

Glory be to thee; O thou moſt higheſt!

*The People ſhall ſay.*

May thy name be bleſſed, thy ways be known, and thy Will be performed by all mankind.—Bleſſed be thy name, O God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*The Miniſter ſhall exhort the people as follows.*

If we ſay that we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confeſs our ſins, and ſincerely repent, God is merciful and will forgive us our ſins, and will cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.

DEARLY beloved brethren, the ſcripture moveth us in ſundry places to acknowledge and confeſs our manifold ſins and wickedneſs, and it is evident to our reaſon that we ſhould not diſſemble, nor cloak them before the face of almighty God, who knoweth all the ſecrets of our hearts, but that we ſhould confeſs them, with an humble, lowly, penitent and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveneſs of the ſame, by his infinite goodneſs and mercy.—And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our ſins before God, yet ought we moſt chiefly to do, when we aſſemble and meet together, to render thanks for the great benefits we have received from him, to ſet forth his moſt worthy praiſe and to aſk thoſe things which are requiſite and neceſſary, as well for the body as the ſoul—Wherefore I pray and beſeech you, as many as are here preſent, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace.

ALMIGHTY and moſt merciful father, We have erred and ſtrayed from thy ways, We have followed too much the deſires of our own hearts.——We have offended againſt thy holy laws; We have left undone thoſe things which we ought to have done; and we have too often done thoſe things which we ought not to have done.--But do thou, O Lord! have mercy upon us repenting ſinners.—Spare thou them, O God, which confeſs and repent of their faults.———Reſtore thou them that are penitent—according to the aſſurances given to mankind by jeſus chriſt.—— And grant, O moſt merciful father!—that thy holy ſpirit may evermore aſſiſt us—in leading godly, righteous and ſober lives.——— To thy glory.——Amen.

*The miniſter ſhall then make this declaration.*

ALMIGHTY God! the creator of all things, deſireth not the death of a ſinner, but would rather that he ſhould turn from his wickedneſs.——And we may be aſſured, that the mercy of the moſt high will be extended to all thoſe who truly repent of their former ſins, and endeavour, with an humble and a contrite ſpirit, to paſs the reſt of their days in holineſs and virtue.

Let us therefore beſeech almighty God, to grant us true repentance and an holy ſpirit, that thoſe things may pleaſe him which we do at this preſent, and that the reſt of our lives hereafter may be pure and holy, according to the example ſet us of a perfect life by jeſus chriſt, in whoſe moſt comprehenſive form of prayer let us call upon the eternal for his bleſſing.

*The Miniſter and the Congregation kneeling ſhall ſilently and devoutly offer up the Prayer.*

OUR father, ~~which~~ who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Miniſter.*

O Lord, open thou our lips;

*People.*

And our mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe.

*Miniſter.*

O God, be pleaſed to ſave us.

*People.*

O Lord, we beſeech thee to hear us.

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*Here follows the Litany.*

O God, the creator of the univerſe: have mercy upon us, accept our prayers, aſſiſt our infirmities, and forgive us our ſins.

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

Remember not our offences, nor the offences of our fore-fathers; neither take thou vengeance of our ſins: ſpare us good Lord; ſpare thy people, and be not angry with us for ever.

*Spare us good Lord.*

From all evil and miſchief, from ſin, and from thy heavy diſpleaſure.

*Good Lord deliver us.*

From all blindneſs of heart: from pride, vain-glory and hypocriſy; from envy, hatred, and malice; and all uncharitableneſs.

*Good Lord deliver us.*

From lightning and tempeſt: from plague, peſtilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from ſudden death.

*Good Lord deliver us.*

From all ſedition and conſpiracies: from ignorance of our nature, and of our duty towards thee; and from contempt of thoſe laws which our reaſon informs us are declaratory of thy will.

*Good Lord deliver us.*

In all time of our tribulation: in all time of our wealth; in the hour of death, and in the day when we ſhall be in thy preſence to receive thy judgment upon our actions.

*Good Lord deliver us.*

We ſinners do beſeech thee to hear us, O Lord God; and that it may pleaſe thee to make thy ways known to all mankind.

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to bleſs our ſovereign and his family, ſtrengthening them in the true knowledge of thee.

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to endue the council, parliament, and all the other courts, with wiſdom, underſtanding and the love of juſtice;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to bleſs and keep our magiſtrates and all perſons who are in office; and to give them grace to execute their truſts with fidelity;

*We beſeech the to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to illuminate all the teachers of religion with true knowledge and underſtanding; and that both by their preaching and living they may contribute to thy glory, and to the conſequent happineſs of this nation;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to give to all nations, unity, peace, and concord;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to bleſs and keep all thy people;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to give us an heart to love and dread thee, and diligently to live after thy commandments;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to preſerve us from all bigotry and ſuperſtition; and to bring into the way of truth all ſuch as are deceived;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord,*

That it may pleaſe thee to comfort and help all ſuch as are in danger, neceſſity, or tribulation;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to preſerve all that travel by land or by water, all women labouring with child, all ſick perſons and young children, and to ſhew thy pity upon all priſoners and captives;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to defend and provide for the fatherleſs children and widows, and all that are deſolate and oppreſſed;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to have mercy upon all men;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to give and preſerve to our uſe, the kindly fruits of the earth, ſo that in due time we may enjoy them;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

That it may pleaſe thee to give us true repentance; to forgive us all our ſins, negligences, and ignorances, and to endue us with the grace of thy holy ſpirit, to amend our lives, and to paſs our days in friendſhip, charity, and brotherly love with all men; whereby, we beſt prove the ſincerity of our devotions to thee, who art the God of mercy, and who wiſheſt the happineſs of all thy creatures;

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

We beſeech thee, O father of mercies to hear our prayers; and of thy goodneſs to keep from us thoſe things we at any time may aſk which will be hurtful unto us, and vouchſafe to give us thoſe good things which will be neceſſary to our welfare, even ſhould our ignorance prevent us from aſking them. Amen.

*We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.*

*Let us Pray.*

O God, merciful father, who deſpiſeſt not the ſighing of a contrite heart, nor the deſire of ſuch as be ſorrowful, mercifully aſſiſt our prayers that we make before thee, in all our troubles and adverſities whenſoever they oppreſs us: and graciouſly hear us that thoſe evils which threaten us, and which we have juſtly merited, may, by thy providence, be averted; that we thy ſervants being hurt by no perſecution, may paſs our time in reſt and quietneſs, and may glorify thee for thy

goodneſs in permitting mankind, through Jeſus Chriſt, to know thee, the one God, the creator of all things. Amen.

O God, we have heard with our ears; and we ourſelves have known the greatneſs of thy majeſty, of thy mercy, and of thy power:

We beſeech thee therefore graciouſly to look upon our afflictions.

Pitifully to behold the ſorrows of our hearts.

Mercifully to forgive the ſins of thy people.

Favorably with mercy to hear our prayers.

O God, let thy mercy be ſhewed unto us,

For we do put our truſt in thee.

*Let us Pray.*

WE humbly beſeech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our infirmities; and for the glory of thy name, turn from us all thoſe evils that we moſt righteouſly have deſerved: and grant that, in all our troubles, we may put our whole truſt and confidence in thee, and evermore ſerve thee in holineſs and pureneſs of living, to thy honor and glory. Amen.

O Almighty God, who haſt given us grace at this time, with one accord, to make our common ſupplications unto thee: fulfil now, O Lord, the deſires and petitions of thy ſervants, as may be moſt expedient for them, granting them in this world the knowledge of thy truth; and, when thou ſhalt be pleaſed to call them hence, giving them to know that their lives had been paſſed in conformity with thy will; that their ſouls will be accepted by thee, and admitted to that higheſt of bleſſings, the more perfect knowledge of the glory of their God. Amen.

May the love of God be with us all evermore. Amen.

*End of the Litany.*

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*The following addreſs to the deity, to be offered up by the miniſter aloud, the people following him ſilently.*

WE praiſe thee O God! we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worſhip thee, the father everlaſting!
'Tis thee! creation doth adore.
The heavens and all the powers therein.
To thee! they offer up their praiſe.
To thee! their father and their God!
Holy! holy! holy! Lord God of ſabaoth!
Heaven and earth, are full of the majeſty of thy glory,

We praiſe thee, O God! we thank thee for thy mercy,
In ſending upon earth the bleſſed Jeſus, to diſpel the darkneſs of the idolatrous world!
Without this mercy, we ſhould have remained in ignorance of thee;
The only God!
And ſhould have ſtill worſhipped the idols of the heathens:
But thy mercy is unbounded! and thy goodneſs without end.
Vouchſafe, O Lord! to keep us this day without ſin:
That we may worthily magnify thy holy name.
Make us to be numbered with thy ſaints in glory everlaſting.
O Lord, ſave thy people and bleſs them.
Govern them, and lift them up for ever.
O Lord have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.
O Lord let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our truſt is in thee.
O Lord in thee have I truſted, let me never be confounded.

*Then the Miniſter ſhall ſay*

Let us thank God for his mercies, and let us pray to Almighty God that he will give us a due underſtanding of the ſcriptures.

*Miniſter.*

O Almighty and omniſcient God, whoſe goodneſs exceedeth the utmoſt ſtretch of human abilities; we thank thee for all thy mercies, more eſpecially for the faculty of reaſon, whereby we are diſtinguiſhed from and exalted above the reſt of thy creatures upon earth: continue, we pray thee, thy favor unto us, and let thy holy ſpirit move us to a due exerciſe of our rational powers, that we may know, and fear, and love thee, the only God: keep us from all bigotry and ſuperſtition, which ever have a tendency to diminiſh thy glory; and empower us in all temptations to look up to thee with confidence and truſt.——And now, O Lord, we beſeech thee to enlighten us with thy wiſdom, that as we are going to read a portion of the ſcriptures, eſteemed by many nations thine inſpired work, we may, through thy bleſſing, be able to know what is neceſſary for fulfilling thy will; and, by the examples there introduced, may ſee that thy providence is always watchful over all thy works, and that, (as thy unalterable goodneſs can never change) thou, having from the firſt made man a free agent, haſt not deſtroyed that free agency, not even in preventing the introduction of errors into theſe reſpected writings.——Enable us therefore, we humbly intreat thee, to diſcover thoſe errors and to receive profit from them, through convincing ourſelves how liable human nature is to be deceived by the arts of the deſigning or ſuperſtitious.——We, thy ſervants, acknow-

ledge thy perfection and thy immutability. —We know that we are bound to do thy will in all things.— We pray thee to acquaint us with it, and to give us grace to perform it. Amen.

*People.*

We beſeech thee, to grant this petition, O thou moſt mighty.

*Then ſhall the Miniſter read the appointed Leſſons in the Bible and Teſtament.*

*Afterwards let the Miniſter deliver a diſcourſe adapted to the leſſons, explaining what is neceſſary, and pointing out any apparent error in the reading; aſſuring his Auditors that God never made any revelation to mankind that he did not wiſh them to underſtand, and that thoſe things which are not ſatisfactory to our reaſon, cannot be the revelations of omniſcience. — Let him enlarge upon the duties that were taught and inculcated by Jeſus Chriſt; let him teach the greatneſs and goodneſs of God, and explain the real conſequence of man in the general ſyſtem of creation, and let him finiſh his ſermon with this pſalm;*

O Be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: ſerve the Lord with gladneſs, and come before his preſence with rejoicing.

Be ye ſure that the Lord he is God; that it is he who hath made us, and not we ourſelves.

O come into his gates with thankſgivings, and into his courts with praiſe: be thankful unto him, aud ſpeak good of his name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlaſting, and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

*Here follows the Belief, to be pronounced aloud by all.*

I Believe in God, the father almighty, maker of heaven and earth: And of all things viſible and inviſible. I believe that his power and wiſdom are unbounded; that he is, from all eternity, a ſole ſelfexiſtent God, and that his duration is without end.

I believe that he made man, the moſt perfect creature upon earth; giving him reaſon that he might diſcover his own nature and might ſerve his God in righteouſneſs and holineſs of life: and I believe that God made man a free agent and left him to the free exerciſe of his powers.

I believe that the earth is a ſmall orb, (in compariſon with the reſt of creation) revolving round the ſun along with other orbs forming one ſyſtem; and which, although of immenſe extent, occupies but as a point in the incomprehenſibility of ſpace.

I believe that God made the ſtars, whoſe diſtance from us is ſo great as to be immeaſurable.--And perceiving that on earth he has done nothing in vain: I do not doubt but the ſtars are ſyſtems of worlds filled with creatures who partake of the bounty of their God.

I believe that creation was an act of the goodneſs of God, and therefore that every thing neceſſary to the happineſs of his creatures was provided for them; and that whatever unhappineſs is met with in the world has ariſen through the miſuſe of the bounties of God.

I believe that God had compaſſion upon the errors and ignorances of mankind, who, in a courſe of years, had forgotten their maker and worſhiped the works of their own hands. I believe that his holy ſpirit permitted Jeſus Chriſt to have an enlightened idea of his attributes, and that Chriſt contemning the world when put in competition with the honor of the great creator, ſuffered the cruel death of the croſs with conſtancy, in proof of the truth of his doctrines.

I believe in a future ſtate, when the almighty will be pleaſed to make himſelf known to thoſe creatures who have rendered themſelves worthy of that greateſt of bleſſings; and I firmly believe that the virtuous will be rewarded with everlaſting happineſs.

N. B. It is to be remarked of every Belief, that, as it is a declaration in the preſence of God, before the congregation, of what a perſon ſays he *believes*, if he either doubts or does not underſtand any parts of the belief he utters, ſo as not to feel a perfect conviction, it is the higheſt perjury a man can be guilty of.——If there is any thing in the above belief incomprehenſible to any one, let him paſs it by, and let no man preſume to declare his belief in what he has doubts of.——God requires no ſet form of words, the heart alone he judges of, and the ſimple and the contrite ſpirit will he not deſpiſe.

*Prayer by the Miniſter.*

GRANT we beſeech thee, Almighty God, that thy holy ſpirit may urge us to a continuance in doing good works, and may aſſiſt us in all our dangers and tribulations.——Strengthen our faith in thee, and increaſe our knowledge of thee.——Make us to prove ourſelves worthy the exalted ſtation to which thou haſt called us, by ever conducting ourſelves with humility towards thee, and with love to our fellow creatures.——Make us to know that thy goodneſs can have no other deſign in creation than of diſpenſing happineſs; and that if any other reſult takes place it is not agreeable to thee, but that it ariſes from the perverſeneſs of thy creatures, to whom thou haſt permitted the freedom of chuſing what is right or following what is wrong.

Thy mercy ſhines conſpicuous in all things here on earth: And thy greatneſs in the immenſe, though regular ſyſtems of worlds which thy goodneſs has permitted the ſenſes of man to perceive, ſuſpended in the regions of ſpace, in harmony fulfilling thy will.

Teach us to know our duty towards thee;—to perform thy will in all thy things;—to paſs our lives ſubſervient to the dictates of reaſon.——Make us to be truly ſenſible of thy mercies, more eſpecially of the bleſſings we enjoy, through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt, of being the worſhipers of thee, the true God, inſtead of remaining in the ignorant worſhip of idols.

Make us, in all our actions, to prove ourselves worthy of this transcendent goodness, and assist us in conducting ourselves in such a manner as may not be displeasing to thee, derogatory to thy greatness, or unworthy of creatures to whom thou hast permitted a knowledge of thy attributes.

To thee, O Lord, we address ourselves, who knowest the infirmities of man.——We beseech thee to have compassion upon us who are continually liable to forget our God, through attending too much to the solicitations of temporal concerns; send down thy blessings upon us, who humbly seek thee, and comfort us, in all our troubles, with the consciousness that thy assistance is not far from us.——Let love and unanimity pervade the whole of thy people; let thy protection be given to all sorts and conditions of men: and inspire us all with such a sense of our duty towards thee, that we may evermore regulate our actions to thy glory.

Accept, O most mighty and most perfect being, the services which we thy servants do, in this thy day, endeavour to render unto thee; and grant, that we may continue, daily, to increase in grace, until it shall please thee to call us from our earthly body to that blessed immortality, which our souls most fervently hope for.

To thee, and to thy name be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

*End of the Morning Service.*

## EVENING SERVICE.

*Prayer:*

PREVENT us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy moſt gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name; and finally, by thy mercy obtain everlaſting life, according to the aſſurances delivered to us, by Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

*Miniſter.*

O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for he his gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever.

O let your ſongs be of him, and praiſe him, and let your talking be of all his wondrous works.

Yet who can expreſs the noble acts of the Lord! or ſhew forth all his praiſe!

Seek the Lord, O ye people! rejoice in his holy name; let the heart of thoſe who ſeek the Lord rejoice.

For he is the Lord our God; and his judgments are in all the world.

*Thankſgiving.*

ALMIGHTY God, father of all mercies, we, thine unworthy ſervants, do give thee moſt humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodneſs, and loving kindneſs to us and all men.

We bleſs thee for our creation, preſervation, and all the bleſſings of this life; but above all for thine ineſtimable love, in ſuffering the bleſſed Jeſus to declare to mankind the truths of thy greatneſs and power; thus giving us the means of grace, whereby we hope for glory.——And we beſeech thee, give us that due ſenſe of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may ſhew forth thy praiſe, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourſelves to thy ſervice, and by walking before thee in holineſs and righteouſneſs all our days, through the inſtructions left us by Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe moſt perfect form of words we offer up our humble petitions.

*The Miniſter and Congregation ſhall ſilently pray.*

OUR father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Miniſter.*

DEARLY beloved brethren.—In the bible, and in the 20th chapter of Exodus, we find a ſet of commandments, ſaid to have been delivered by the almighty to Moſes.

Their beautiful, yet majeſtic ſimplicity, proves them to have been written by one who felt the greatneſs of God, and our reaſon aſſents to their propriety.——In their due obſervance all religion and morality conſiſts. I will therefore read part of them to you; and let us, after each commandment, offer unto the Almighty a prayer, that he will have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep theſe laws.

## COMMANDMENTS.

I. Thou ſhalt have none other Gods but one, for God, alone is the ſole creator of all things.

*People.*

*Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

II. Thou ſhalt not make to thyſelf any graven image, nor the likeneſs of any thing which is in heaven or in earth, in order thereunto to fall down and worſhip.

*Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

III. Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his name in vain.

*Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

IV. Remember that thou keep holy the ſabbath day, ſix days ſhalt thou labour, and do what thou haſt to do; but the ſeventh ſhall be conſecrated as a ſabbath to the Lord thy God: in it thou ſhalt not do any manner of work to gain a living, neither ſhalt thou ſuffer any of thy family.

*Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

V. Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God hath given thee.

*Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

VI. Thou ſhalt do no murder.

*Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

VII. Thou ſhalt not commit adultery.

*Lord, have mercy npon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

VIII. Thou ſhalt not ſteal.

*Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

IX. Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour.

*Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

X. Thou ſhalt not covet thy neighbour's houſe, thou ſhall not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man ſervant, nor his maid ſervant, nor his ox, nor his aſs, nor any thing that is his.

*Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all theſe thy laws in our hearts, we beſeech thee.*

☞ Here let the miniſter deliver a ſermon, explanatory of one of theſe commandments, pointing out, with all due ſimplicity and clearneſs, the abſolute neceſſity of every perſon, who wiſhes to bear the name of a rational creature, exerciſing his faculties to underſtand the full meaning of theſe commandments, and endeavouring to conduct his life in conformity with them. ——— It is the duty of the miniſter of God, to aſſiſt and correct the failings of his cure; let him therefore, if he perceives any public vice gaining ground among his pariſhioners, declare from the pulpit his reaſons for believing it offenſive to God; adviſe the amendment and correc-

tion of it; and let him privately admoniſh any he may find tranſgreſſing the ordinances of God, through paſſing their lives in an unrighteous manner. —— Let him always addreſs the reaſon of his auditors, encouraging them to apply to it at all times; and let him be ready to explain to every one (however low in ſtation or weak in abilities) whatever doubts or difficulties may oppreſs them; for by this condeſcenſion a ſoul may be ſaved from perdition; and before the throne of omnipotence, the ſoul of a poor man is of equal value with that of the moſt exalted upon earth. —— When the miniſter finiſhes his diſcourſe, let him offer up the following pſalm;

O God, be merciful unto us, and bleſs us, and ſhew us the light of thy countenance, and be merciful unto us.

That thy way may be known upon earth; thy ſaving health among all nations.

Let the people praiſe thee O God: yea, let all the people praiſe thee!

O let all nations rejoice and be glad; for thou doſt judge the folk with righteouſneſs, and doſt govern with wiſdom every part of thy works.

Let the people praiſe thee, O God; let all the people praiſe thee.

O God, bleſs us; and let all parts of the world learn to know thee, and to do thy will.

Then ſhall the earth bring forth her increaſe; and thou, O God, even our own God, ſhalt give us thy bleſſing.

*All the Congregation ſhall ſay,*

Glory be to God, in the higheſt; and on earth, peace and goodwill towards men.

*Prayer.*

O God, from whom all holy deſires, all good counſels and all juſt works do proceed, give unto thy ſervants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be ſet to obey thy commandments: and alſo, that by thee, we being defended, may paſs our time in reſt and quietneſs, and in a due performance of the duties taught us by the precepts of Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

*Prayer.*

LIGHTEN our darkneſs, we beſeech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy, defend us this night from all perils and dangers. Amen.

*Let Leſſons in the Bible and Teſtament be here read: Afterwards this Prayer.*

O God, the creator and preſerver of all mankind, we humbly beſeech thee for all ſorts and conditions of men; that thou wouldeſt be pleaſed to make thy ways known unto them, thy ſaving health unto all na-

tions. More eſpecially we pray thee for the good eſtate of thy church; that it may be ſo guided and governed by thy good ſpirit, that all who profeſs and call themſelves thy ſervants, may be led into the way of truth, and may hold the faith in unity of ſpirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteouſneſs of life. Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodneſs, all thoſe who are any ways afflicted in mind, body, or eſtate: and pray that it may pleaſe thee to comfort and relieve them under their ſeveral neceſſities, giving them patience under their ſufferings, and a happy iſſue out of all their afflictions. Amen.

*Prayer.*

O God, whoſe nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive our humble petitions, and though we be tied and faſt bound with the chain of our ſins, yet, let the pitifulneſs of thy great mercy looſe us for the honor of thy holy name. Amen.

*End of the Evening Service.*

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N. B. As the pariſhioners have met together to celebrate the honor of their God, and as muſic has a great effect in elevating the ſoul to juſt ideas, let anthems, properly ſelected, be now performed; and choral parts, expreſſive of the greatneſs of the Almighty, be adapted for the congregation to join in:—And let the evening be paſſed in a ſtudied attention, to render honor to him who liveth and reigneth for ever, and ever.

## COMMUNION.

*On the firſt Sunday in the Month, let the Commemoration of the laſt Supper of Chriſt and his Diſciples, be celebrated with Piety and thanks—for in the 22d Chapter of St. Luke. we are told of his appointment of it.*

" This do in Remembrance of me."

*Let therefore a table be covered with a fair Cloth, and let Wine and Bread be ſet thereon, and the Communicants ſtanding round, let the Miniſter exhort them as follows.*

DEARLY beloved in the Lord, we are met together to celebrate the commemoration of the laſt ſupper of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe doctrines we acknowledge as the foundation of our hopes; it is therefore our duty to examine ourſelves before we preſume to eat of that bread, or drink of that cup.

The moſt perfect being, by every account, that ever was upon earth, after having exerted himſelf to the utmoſt in calling mankind to the knowledge of the true God, foreſaw that the malice of the jewiſh prieſts would prevail, and that his life would be taken away as a ſacrifice for having diſcovered their errors.

Celebrating the paſſover (which was a high feſtival with the jews) the friend of mankind perceived

the hour was come, when he was to be delivered up to the punifhment of death: ——Full of virtue, void of pride, he merely forwarned his difciples that his end approached; and after having given thanks, he brake the bread and gave to his difciples, and likewife gave them of the cup, fimply commanding,

" This do in remembrance of me."

The benefits which we have received from the communications of Jefus Chrift, juftly entitle him through the goodnefs of almighty God, to the high name that is given him by many nations, of Saviour of the world, for before his time idolatry pervaded the whole earth.——It becomes us therefore with thanks and praife, to declare the goodnefs of the almighty God, and with unfeigned gratitude to acknowledge our fenfe of the bleffings we have received through the life of Chrift Jefus; who defired this feftival fhould be kept, that as often as we fhould meet together to celebrate it, we might confider how boldly he facrificed his life for the glory of the moft high; and that we might be encouraged nobly to facrifice every prefent defire, which fhould in the leaft interfere with that higheft concern, viz. our endeavour to fulfil the will of God;——let us therefore addrefs ourfelves to Almighty God, that he will be pleafed to fend his holy fpirit among us to cleanfe us from all our fins.

*Prayer:*

O Omnipotent and all-wiſe being, thou creator of all things, have favor upon thy humble ſervants who offer up their prayers unto thee;—Let thy holy ſpirit ſanctify us, and impart into us new life;—make us to know, to fear, to love thee:——And grant that the reſt of our lives may be conducted to the glory of thee whoſe goodneſs, mercy and power are conſpicuous in all things.———We thank thee, O God, with our whole hearts, for all thy loving kindneſs to mankind, more eſpecially for the knowledge we have received of thee, through Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe life was a proof of his faith and confidence in thee.——Grant that we who are here met together in all humility to acknowledge thy goodneſs, and to commemorate the laſt ſupper of Jeſus Chriſt, may receive the full benefit of thy mercies, through conſidering and perceiving the duty of a creature's ſtudying to fulfill his maker's will in all things; and therefore, that we may from henceforth exert ourſelves in avoiding the errors and vices of the world.—And, O Lord, as we are fully perſuaded that the conduct of Jeſus Chriſt was pleaſing to thee, ſo we beſeech thee to grant us thoſe powers which will enable us to conduct ourſelves in ſuch a manner, that we may anſwer the deſign wherefore thou wert pleaſed to call us into being. Amen.

*All the Congregation.*

Pardon our offences, O moſt high; and ſtrengthen our confidence in thee.

Thou knoweſt our ſecret thoughts;—thou knoweſt the things we ought to aſk.

Give unto us, we humbly beſeech thee, thoſe things which are neceſſary to our ſalvation. Amen. Amen.

*Prayer.*

O Almighty and ever merciful God, who hadſt compaſſion upon the infirmities of man, and didſt impart a true knowledge of thy majeſty to the bleſſed Jeſus: We humbly beſeech thee, that we, thy creatures, receiving this bread and drinking of this cup in remembrance of that auguſt perſonage, may be fill'd with gratitude and love towards thee; and thus, continually recalling to our minds the ſacrifice which he made, that we may be lead to avoid every offence; in thought, word and deed, to endeavour to glorify thy holy name. Amen.

*Miniſter.*

DEARLY beloved, this bread and wine are delivered to you agreeable to the inſtitution of Chriſt Jeſus, that as often as ye meet together to partake of it ye ſhould be induced to examine and conſider the intent of the ſacrifice he made, when he offered up his life in

proof of his confidence in God. Ye know that ye made not yourſelves, that all your powers are confined, and that there muſt, of neceſſity, be one ſelfexiſtent being; this being we call God.——Examine every part of creation, his wiſdom and goodneſs are fully diſplayed; and love and fear muſt pervade every reflecting mind.

To this omnipotent Being all honor and praiſe are due;—but we perceive, throughout the world, numbers ignorant of him, and acting contrary to the good of their fellow creatures; hence, we ſee the freedom he has given to man of acting as he thinks covenient to himſelf.

This licence had the effect of producing a general depravity among mankind, but as the laws of God are immutable and all-wiſe, the world could not be prevented from wickedneſs by any extraordinary ſupernatural interpoſition of the Almighty, without deſtroying that free agency, which, perhaps is the grand diſtinction of the race of man in the general ſyſtem of creation, and which, being taken away from man, would be the means of rendering one ſpecies of creatures extinct:—God therefore of his infinite goodneſs, called Jeſus Chriſt to a true knowledge of his attributes, and enabled him to declare to the world thoſe truths which the errors of mankind had obſcured.

By Jeſus Chriſt were the commandments of omnipotence declared, his goodneſs proclaimed, and his power made known to all men.

Let us then, my brethren, when we eat of his bread and drink of this wine, acknowledge with gratitude the goodneſs of God; and let us conſider ourſelves as being partakers of the laſt ſupper of Jeſus Chriſt;——let us recall to our remembrance, all thoſe doctrines which are clearly his;——let us enter into his views, and let us prove ourſelves man the favoured creature of our God; let us ſeek to know his will,—let us ſtudy to fulfill it, and let us draw near and partake of theſe viands in ſolemn aſſurance and confirmation to one another, that we believe in one God, as declared by Jeſus Chriſt; that we thankfully remember the merits of the life of Chriſt; and that it is our full determination to endeavour to prove ourſelves worthy the ſacrifice he made, by ſhewing charity to all mankind for the ſake of him whom we now celebrate.

One charge more I have to give you,——viz. that this is a ſolemn act before your God, who knoweth all things and cannot be deceived; ſearch therefore your hearts, examine into your ſins, ſee if any remain which you have not repented of, or whether any malice or wrath is in you that you have not determined to conquer;—if ſuch there be, leave, I beſeech you, this table, nor think to mock your God; go home, repent of your ſins, forgive thoſe who have offended you, and come to our next celebration with contrition and ſincerity of heart:—And be ye aſſured that God, upon your ſincere repentance, (which he alone can judge of,) and your full determination to avoid offending for the future, will

favorably hear thoſe prayers you then ſhall offer up to him for forgiveneſs of the ſins with which your conſciences have been oppreſſed.

*The Miniſter addreſſing himſelf to the Communicants, ſhall ſay, after breaking the Bread, &c.*

TAKE and eat of this bread in remembrance that Chriſt gave up his life rather than deny his God.

Take and drink of this cup in remembrance of the blood that Chriſt ſhed for the ſake of mankind,—always recollecting that he died in charity with all men, praying upon the croſs for even thoſe who had been his enemies;——and let us, with unfeignedneſs, offer unto God the ſacrifice of thankſgiving in full determination of leading virtuous lives, to the end, that God may be glorified, and may be pleaſed to admit us unto a more perfect knowledge of him.

*Here let every one offer a gift according to his abilities, and let theſe gifts be applied to the uſe of the poor of the pariſh.*

*The Congregation ſhall ſay,*

We offer up theſe gifts, to thee O God, as an acknowledgment of thy mercies, and in teſtimony to one another, that we are in charity with all men.

*Then this Pſalm.*

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace and goodwill towards men.

We praiſe thee, O God; we bleſs thee; we worſhip thee; we give thee thanks for thy great glory, O Lord God, our heavenly king; O God, the Father Almighty.

*Miniſter.*

THE peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and in remembrance of the doctrines of Jeſus Chriſt; and the bleſſings of the one, true, ſole, ſelfexiſtent, God be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

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## Form of MATRIMONY.

*When the couple to be married and their friends come to the altar, the miniſter ſhall addreſs them as follows.*

DEARLY beloved, we are here met together in the ſight of Almighty God, to hear the plighted troths of theſe two perſons who purpoſe to paſs their lives in unity and love.

The ſtate of matrimony is honorable in every part of the world; altho' many nations differ in their ideas of it. We eſteem it the ſolemn engagement of virtuous perſons, made publicly to the community, that they will fulfil the commands of their maker in temperance and chaſtity; and that they will, to the utmoſt of their power, perform the duties of good parents:—but marriages are equally ſacred without conforming to ceremonies.

Let me beſeech ye, who are about to acknowledge each other in the near relation of huſband and wife, to conſider fully the duties of this ſtate.——God has given to man the greater ſtrength, and has appointed to woman to bear children, and weakneſs with neceſſary confinement is the regular conſequence of the birth :— Thus are your duties clearly pointed out to you.

To comfort and protect the woman, to endeavour to eaſe her from the anxiety ſhe may feel in her time of pain, by mild attentions and tender love; to inſtruct her and encourage her in all the virtues is the true duty of man.

While the woman, ſenſible of the weakneſs of her ſex, ſhould exerciſe that delicate effeminacy which nature has given her, and which is the firſt delight of man, in ſubmiſſive yet cheerful love.

Let religious virtue appear in all your actions, and while he affords thee protection, return him thy love with that ſweetneſs which never fails to rivet the affections of man.——And if it ſhall pleaſe the heavenly Father to intruſt you with the care of children, let your conduct towards them prove your ſenſe of the duties you owe to God.——So ſhall happineſs attend you both in this world and in the world to come.

Brethren, attend to the declarations of theſe perſons.

*Qu. To the Man.*

Is there any other woman whom thou preferreſt to this? An.

*Qu. To the Woman,*

Is there any other man whom thou wouldeſt wiſh to marry in preference to this?—An.

Does any one in the congregation doubt their aſſertions?

Wilt thou N. N. have this woman to thy wife? wilt thou endeavour to fulfil the will of God, in loving her, protecting her, and keeping to her only as long as ye both ſhall live?—I will.

Wilt thou N. N. have this man to thy huſband? and performing the will of God, keep thee only unto him as long as ye both ſhall live?—I will.

*Then ſhall the Man ſay*

Before this congregation I acknowledge thee N. N. for my wife, and in token whereof, I give thee this ring, engraved with my name; by which, from henceforth, thou ſhalt be known.

*Then ſhall the Woman ſay,*

Before this congregation I acknowledge thee N. N. for my huſband, and in token whereof, I give thee this ring, engraved with my maiden name; which, from henceforth, I will no more uſe.

*Then the Miniſter ſhall ſay,*

Brethren, from henceforth reſpect this couple as man and wife; and may God, of his infinite mercy, bleſs you.

*Prayer.*

O God, we beſeech thee to bleſs theſe thy ſervants, and to ſow the ſeed of eternal life in their hearts, that whatſoever to thy glory they may undertake they may ſucceſsfully fulfil:—And grant, that they, ſtudying thy will in all things, and always being obedient unto it, may be in full ſafety under thy protection, may abide in thy love unto their lives end, and may finally receive everlaſting ſalvation. Amen.

N. B. The marriage is to be regiſtered—and atteſted by the miniſter.

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## B A P T I S M.

DEARLY beloved brethren, for as much as it hath pleaſed Almighty God that we ſhould be born in ignorance, and that the powers of our reaſon ſhould, in a great meaſure, depend upon the cultivation beſtowed upon it; it evidently behooves every parent to attend to the education and inſtruction of his children.—But the ſalvation of their ſouls is a concern ſo great, that

our government has thought proper to adviſe, that there be provided for infants, a new relation, whoſe chief concern ſhould be to take care that in due time they be inſtructed in ſuch a knowledge of their own nature, as will lead them to know, and love and fear God:—And to render them worthy of admittance into the kingdom of heaven; by inducing them to paſs their lives as good and virtuous citizens, whereby they will beſt prove the ſincerity of their profeſſions of religion.

Let me therefore exhort you who are to be god-fathers and god-mothers of this child, that you will ſincerely reflect upon the duties you are about to undertake; not eſteeming it a trifling matter of mere form, but ſteadfaſtly and ſincerely purpoſing to fulfil the ſpirit of the obligation you are now about to lay yourſelves under; conſidering, that to you the child is hereafter to think himſelf indebted for the happineſs he may enjoy, or to blame you for the ignorance he may be in and for the miſery he may ſuffer, if you wilfully neglect to give him the information neceſſary to enable him to conduct himſelf in religious temperance and charity.

To ye therefore, who appear before me as intending to be the parents in God of this child; I now addreſs myſelf:

Will ye, in the name of God, take care that this child ſhall be educated in his native language?

Will ye, to the beſt of your abilities, provide him with uſeful and good books?

Will ye pay attention to inſtruct him in the knowledge of God to the beſt of your abilities?

Will ye call upon him to attend divine ſervice, acquainting him with the duties man is bound to pay to his creator?

Will ye inſtruct him in the knowledge of his own nature, aſſiſting him with advice whenever he is likely to fall into error?

Will ye call upon him to acquaint himſelf with thoſe laws of the land in which every individual is concerned?

*The God-fathers and God-mothers ſhall anſwer,*

Theſe we faithfully promiſe, and we entreat the congregation to join us in prayer to Almighty God, that he will grant a happy reſult to our endeavours.

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY and everlaſting God, we thine humble ſervants do offer to thee our earneſt intreaties, that thou wilt be pleaſed to call us all to a true knowledge of thee.——— Grant that theſe ſponſors for this child, may ever put that confidence in thy power which will

enable them to fulfil the duties they have undertaken.—And, we beſeech thee, give thy holy ſpirit to this infant, that he may early walk in thy way, and may renounce all the covetous deſires and vain-glories of this world, which too often take mankind from thy ſervice.

Teach him ſo to number his days, that, being dead unto ſin but alive unto righteouſneſs, he may finally attain to that tranſcendent bleſſing, the bleſſing of a more intimate and ſpiritual knowledge of thee, his God.——Teach him to know the worth of thy loving mercy when thou waſt pleaſed to furniſh Jeſus Chriſt with thoſe lights, whereby he was enabled to diſpell the darkneſs that overſhadowed the earth; when mankind ſerved idols, the work of their own hands, inſtead of ſerving thee the ſelf-exiſting God.——To thee, O moſt Mighty, we addreſs ourſelves, in the name and form of prayer of Jeſus Chriſt, beſeeching thee to grant us thoſe things which may be beneficial to us.

OUR Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our treſpaſſes as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

DEARLY beloved, this child is now under the care of all its parents; and as from its natural father it will take one name whereby he will be diſtinguiſhed from other families, ſo let him now receive another name whereby he may be diſtinguiſhed as a ſervant of God.——How ſhall he be called?——

*The Sponſors ſhall anſwer.*

*Miniſter.*

IN the name of the moſt high God;——be this infant from henceforth called———— and I ſign him with water, and the ſign of the croſs, in token that ye, his ſponſors have undertaken to inſtruct him in the knowledge of the one God as declared by Jeſus Chriſt, who ſuffered death upon the croſs in proof of his faith in the creator.—— And may the bleſſing of Almighty God proſper your undertakings. Amen.

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## BURIAL SERVICE.

*Dearly beloved Brethren,*

ON————————it pleaſed Almighty God to permit the ſoul of our brother———— to leave its earthly habitation, whoſe body we are now about to commit to the grave.

Mortality is annexed to humanity as inevitably as light is to fire; and as it is certain, from natural reaſon, that our ſouls or the ſenſitive part of our frame are diſtinct from the fleſh in which they exiſt, and may therefore enjoy a ſeparate exiſtence; ſo we feel a conviction, that in the ſcheme of providence, there is a ſtate of future rewards for the virtuous, or thoſe who obey the will of their God.

From the uncertainty of the time of our departure from this world, we ought at all times to lead our lives in ſuch a manner, as to be prepared to anſwer the call of our maker.

Let us therefore, (who now aſſiſt at the ceremony of putting this body into the ground.——Aſhes to aſhes, duſt to duſt, truſting in the mercy of God, that he will be pleaſed to call this our departed brother to his reſt) take this opportunity of addreſſing ourſelves to the protection of God, that he may bleſs us in all our endeavours to render ourſelves worthy of his love; and that we, being impreſſed with the idea of the inevitableneſs of death, may be lead to make this example beneficial to ourſelves.

Saint Paul ſays, " we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can take nothing out.—The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away;——Bleſſed be the name of the Lord."

The truth of the foregoing is proved every day, and the advantage we ought to make of it, is to reflect

on the folly of thoſe who, troubling themſelves always about temporal concerns, neglect the conſideration of that which is of infinitely greater conſequence, viz. The ſtate we are to experience hereafter.

No man has returned from the grave to tell us of futurity;—— uncertainty and doubts are the reſult of every enquiry: but this we know, that, as there is a good God, he muſt have directed every thing proper; and on his mercy we may ſafely rely, if we endeavour to fulfil his will while we are on earth.

To us the knowledge of the particulars of the future ſtate would be of no uſe, and we may be aſſured that the uncertainty we labour under is moſt advantageous to the general ſyſtem of creation.———God has confined our duties to this life, and futurity muſt diſcloſe its ſecrets to us when we are capable of underſtanding them; but this we ſhould truſt in, that the goodneſs of God will never fail, and that it will be fully extended over every part of the creation.

Yet man that is born of a woman hath but a ſhort time to live:——He cometh up and is cut down like a flower; he fleeth as it were a ſhadow, and never continueth in one ſtay.

In the midſt of life we are in death; of whom may we ſeek for ſuccour but of the Lord?

O God, moſt holy; O Lord moſt mighty; O Holy and bleſſed creator, deliver us from the bonds of ſin.

Then ſhall we cry with exultation. O Death! where is thy Sting? O Grave! where is thy Victory?

Thanks be to God, who forgiving us our ſins, hath given us the victory.

*Prayer.*

O Almighty and everlaſting God, who hateſt nothing that thou haſt made, nor deſireſt the death of a ſinner, but rather that he ſhould turn from his wickedneſs and live: Look down with favor on thy humble ſervants, who acknowledge their tranſgreſſions, and who beſeech thee to grant them forgiveneſs of their ſins. They confeſs, with contrition, that their thoughts are too often drawn away, by the cares of the world, from the due conſideration of a future ſtate; and that their actions are too frequently unworthy of beings who are in expectation of immortality.———But to thee, who art the God of all goodneſs, we addreſs ourſelves, and pray, that thou wouldeſt be pleaſed to impreſs our minds with ſuch a ſenſe of the neceſſity of attending to our duties, that we may accompliſh whatſoever thou expecteſt from creatures whom thou haſt favored

with faculties, whereby they may know their God; yet to whom thou haſt given free agency——— We ſee, by the end of this our brother, whoſe body we have juſt committed to the earth, as well as by the experience of every day, that death is the inevitable lot of all men; and that thou, at an unknown time, doſt require that we ſhould reſign our ſouls and ſhould no more live on earth———But, O Creator, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works which thou didſt in their days and in the old time before them.———We believe, that theſe thy noble works would not have been performed, hadſt not thou deſigned for man, a future ſtate of ſenſe, when, having left his preſent habitation, he ſhall more diſtinctly know that God, whoſe power and goodneſs he had ſeen on earth.——We have been taught by Jeſus Chriſt, that thy favor will be ſhewn to thoſe alone who do thy will, whilſt vindictive judgments ſhall be iſſued againſt ſuch as are ſinners and diſobedient to the dictates of their reaſon.——We know, O Lord, the frailties of our nature, and how many are the tranſgreſſions of mankind: But we alſo believe that thy mercies are unbounded, that thy judgments are ever lenient, and that thy forgiveneſs is ever accorded to the truely repentant ſinner.———Give unto us, O omnipotent and all perfect Being, ſuch a knowledge of thee as may lead us to a ſincere repentance of thoſe ſins which we have heretofore committed, and may induce us in

the time to come, to ſtudy to know and perform our duties to thee, and our relative duties to all our fellow creatures.———Give us hearts, to love, aſſiſt, and comfort one another in the full perfection of that ſyſtem of univerſal charity which the bleſſed Jeſus taught to his diſciples.———Teach us to be grateful to thee for his life, his ſufferings, his death; and grant, that whenever we aſſiſt at the ceremony of interring a fellow creature, we may recall to our minds the reſignation of Jeſus, which could alone proceed from the ſenſe of having in all things faithfully fulfilled thy will; and give unto us, that at our deaths we may receive alike comfort from a ſimilar confidence in thee. Grant, O Father, that we worthily thinking of Chriſt's death, may be more ſtrongly urged to do thoſe acts which thy wonderful ſcheme of creation makes it the duty of every being to perform: and grant that, whenever it ſhall pleaſe thee to call us from this ſtate of exiſtence, our deaths may be no ways terrible to us, through having our boſoms comforted with theſe reflections; that although we are offenders yet that our judge is merciful, and that he is evermore ready to forgive than to puniſh. To thee, O God, whoſe perfections are unſpeakable; whoſe goodneſs is unbounded; whoſe ſelfexiſtent nature is incomprehenſible to man; we offer up our praiſe; bleſſed be thy name O God for ever and ever! Amen.

# CHURCHING OF WOMEN.

*Minister.*

FOR as much as it hath pleased Almighty God to give you safe deliverance, and to preserve you in child-birth; you shall therefore give hearty thanks unto God, and say,

I am well-pleased that the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live:

For my soul was full of trouble; and my flesh was oppressed with pain:

And I cried to the Lord God of my salvation, and he permitted my prayer to enter into his presence:

And his mercy delivered me; and my travail was at an end.

What return can I make unto the Lord for his goodness, or for all the benefits he has done unto me?

I will pay my vows now, in the presence of his people; I will declare his truth, and will speak of his mercies, which reach above the clouds.

Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy truth: O knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy name.

I thank thee, O God, with my whole heart; I will praiſe thy name for ever and ever.

For great was thy mercy toward me;—I was in miſery and thou helpedſt me.

*To be omitted if the Child is dead.*

And thou reſtoredſt me to my family with honor and with fame:

For thou permittedſt me to bring forth a child, who hereafter may be admitted to the knowledge of his God.

Teach him thy ſtatutes, O God, and render thy paths delightful unto him.

So ſhall he be lead to ſerve thee, in humbleneſs and lowneſs of heart, and to walk in thy ways all the days of his life.

Happy is the man who is thus bleſſed in his children; happy is the family who faithfully ſerve the Lord!

Turn again unto thy reſt, O my ſoul, for the Lord hath rewarded thee.

For he hath ſaved thee from death and the condemnation of ſinners.

Join with me in praiſes all ye his people? O let us always praiſe the Lord?———Bleſſed be thy holy name O God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Miniſter.*

O Almighty God, we give thee humble thanks for that thou haſt vouchſafed to deliver this woman, thy ſervant, from the great pain of child-birth;——Grant, we beſeech thee moſt merciful father, that ſhe, through thy help, may both faithfully live and walk according to thy will in this life preſent; and may alſo be partaker of everlaſting glory in the world to come, through performing thy will, and through faith in thy mercies as declared by Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe name and words we further call upon thee.

OUR Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our treſpaſſes as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

*E N D.*

## CERTAIN REGULATIONS DICTATED

*By JACOBUS VERITAS.*

Not enforced by Acts of Parliament but left to the option of the Parishes.

BETWEEN morning and evening services I would have the chief people of the parish meet together and consult upon the best means of relieving any of the parishioners, who through poverty or illness, are afflicted with distress:——I would likewise have them enquire into the morals of every one, and where errors appear, take proper steps to correct them.——If any are idle or vicious, let them be exhorted to a contrary behaviour, and if exhortation fails, let them be sent into confinement, that they may have leisure to perceive wherein they have been wrong.

I would likewise wish all my subjects both rich and poor, to be provided with one similar plain dress, which they should wear when they went into the church on a sunday:———Not that any particular religious act is hereby intended by the ceremony of dress, but merely to encourage cleanliness among all the parishioners, and to enable every one to make a proper appearance when before the throne of God.——But the effect will not rest here, for it will assist the minister in inspiring the congregation with a just sense of the real

conſequence of man; by humbling the proud and exalting the lowly and meek.———This dreſs I would wiſh to be provided by the pariſh at a general expence, and no diſcriminating alteration to be admitted from the higheſt to the loweſt.

Let every individual be entruſted with the care of his own dreſs, but let him be required to be careful of it, under pain of cenſure of the meeting, who ſhall deprive him of it for any offence, which they think requires this puniſhment, until his contrition ſhall have worked out his pardon.

Likewiſe at this meeting, let the leſſons for the next ſunday be ſelected, taking care to chuſe ſuch as may afford the miniſter an opportunity of aſſiſting the underſtandings of the weak, by bringing them to a due ſenſe and knowledge of the Lord and his will.—And let them be ſelected in the due courſe, till the whole bible and teſtament are gone through.——— Once in every three months let ſome part of the Alcoran of Mahomet be read, and let the miniſter make ſuch commentaries thereon as he thinks proper.

And in caſe upon any particular occaſion it ſhould appear neceſſary that other prayers ſhould be added to thoſe already appointed, let the miniſters prepare them, and ſubmit them to the church-wardens and heads of the pariſh, for their approbation and correction. *

* Theſe regulations are every where ſtrictly attended to, and the people fulfil with eagerneſs, all the wiſhes of their founder.

Having thus given you their form of prayer, I ſhall, in order to elucidate their religious opinions, introduce ſome diſcourſes that are publiſhed in Veritas.———The three firſt are ſuppoſed to have been prepared and delivered by Jacobus Veritas, himſelf.--And are now generally read in all their churches, on the firſt three ſundays in the year—the laſt diſcourſe is a later production.

# RELIGIOUS DISCOURSES,

*As delivered by the Veritafian Clergy.*

## Difcourfe the Firft.

DEARLY beloved, in that part of the book of pfalms which we this morning read, we found the following fentence,

Lord! what is man that thou art mindful of him? or the fon of man that thou fo regardeft him?

This text, in all the countries through which I have travelled, is a favourite of preachers of every denomination, and they ufe it to enable them to difplay the wonderful goodnefs of God, in preferving the children of men.

To make it a wonder that God fhould be mindful of creatures whom he hath called into exiftence, is a proof of wanting that knowledge which would teach us to fee every thing, as the wife contrivance of a beneficent creator.

Thefe words were ufed by the pfalmift, to expreſs his fenfe of the inferiority of man, when his mind had been employed in contemplating the power of God.

The wonderful ſuperiority of the ſelfexiſtent being muſt inevitably fill, with the moſt reverential awe, whatever human breaſt contemplates his perfections:—But to ſuppoſe that his providence is at any time regardleſs of his works, is judging of his nature, as if he were equally liable to change his plans, as human beings, whoſe ſhortſightedneſs and limitted powers prevent them from knowing every circumſtance which may be annexed to any future event, and therefore they cannot avoid altering and amending their opinions, according as new objects preſent themſelves unto them.

But with God it is otherwiſe, his preſcience prevents him from the poſſibility of change; and his omniſcience enables him to diſcover every reſult, even before the means are prepared to produce it.

The power of God is diſplayed through all his works, and his goodneſs is ever acting for their ſupport; for it would argue a want of power, conſequently of perfection, were it poſſible for the ſupreme being, for one moment, to leave creation unregulated.

We will quit the idea which is annexed to the words of the text, expreſſive of the kindneſs of God, in regarding the children of men; and will take this opportunity of enquiring into that moſt uſeful queſtion, what is man?

To this, it may be anſwered generally,—that man is a created being, capable of obſerving events; of combining and ſeparating ideas; of judging from paſt circumſtances of the *probability* of the future; and poſſeſſing faculties whereby he can communicate his ſentiments to others:——His nature animal, partaking of its general properties, and his grand diſtinction from other animals is his mental powers.

Upon examining into this deſcription, we find ourſelves to be of this order in creation; if we look around us we perceive man evidently occupying the firſt rank in the world, and making ſubſervient and of uſe to himſelf every other creature.

Enquiring further into our nature, we find it a compounded one;——we feel wants; we are ſubject to infirmities; we are liable to many accidents in common with other animals; but at the ſame time, we perceive that our powers are vaſtly ſuperior to theirs, and that the moſt ignorant of the human race is capable of aſſerting this difference, even over the moſt formidable of the brute creation.

In the ſtate of ſociety, we find the faculty whereby we acquire this ſuperiority, and which we call reaſon, capable of the moſt wonderful extention and improvement.

By the aſſiſtance of reaſon we provide for every neceſſary of life with all the caution of preſcient beings, and the mutations that are diſcoverable in nature are turned to our advantages.

This faculty, we have it in our power to enlarge, and we perceive that it is diſtinct from the body: — for ſometimes when the body is at reſt, and animal nature incapable of motion, the mind is actively employed; while on the contrary, ſometimes our animal nature ſeems to act as a mere mechanical work ungoverned or unaffected by reaſon.

Hence, we conclude, that man is compounded of a ſpiritual as well as corporeal ſubſtance; and his ſpiritual part has been called by the name of ſoul.

The ſoul of man, or his ſpiritual part, requires our utmoſt conſideration, in as much as it is not perceptable to any of our corporal faculties, but is diſcoverable only from the exertions of thoſe powers themſelves which conſtitute what we may call the ſoul; and in no perſons is the conviction of our poſſeſſing a ſoul diſtinct from the body, yet connected with it ſo ſtrong as in thoſe who have moſt attentively examined into it.

When I firſt aſked myſelf,—what is man? confuſion filled my mind, and I could make no other reply than, that I was a created being; becauſe, I found it impoſſible for me to make myſelf. —— Immediately this queſtion followed,—who created me?

I caſt my eyes around the world, I no where ſaw a being of greater powers than man; I knew his incapacity to create, and I anſwered, "I am the creature of "an inviſible being."

Who then created this inviſible being?—— I ſoon diſcovered the neceſſity of one, ſelfexiſtent, Being, as a firſt cauſe of all things, and I was convinced of the impoſſibility of a created being, forming juſt ideas of ſelfexiſtence.

This ſelfexiſtent being is our God.

We examine into his eſſence and are filled with wonder at his perfections; and we join with the pſalmiſt in expreſſing our ſenſe of his greatneſs.

After thus acknowledging acreator, the ſoul enquires into its own nature, and at length perceives that its ſtate of exiſtence in the human body is but for a certain time, that the body dies, and that its own fate is involved in uncertainty; becauſe, although every day furniſhes us with proofs of the inevitability of this end of man, yet does not any ſoul return from the grave, to acquaint us with the circumſtances that happen after death.

The conſideration of the great powers of the ſoul, whereby we ſeem to enjoy a different being from the reſt of the creatures upon earth, has in moſt ages induc-

ed men to believe in a future ſtate; and they have received as a convincing proof of the certainty of it, that the creator would not have permitted the pains which ſome men feel in this world, nor the unequal diſtribution of its comforts, unleſs he had provided a place of future happineſs, where they might meet with a recompenſe for every thing they had ſuffered:—and then, noticing the wickedneſs of many, they have concluded, that a place of puniſhment would certainly be prepared for ſuch ſinners.

This doctrine of the immortality of the ſoul, and a ſtate of future rewards and puniſhmeuts has been taught by moſt of the learned, among the ancients; and their poets have left us deſcriptions of the palaces, and groves, and delights, which filled their elyſium or place of rewards; and alſo, of the torments that are practiſed upon thoſe who were condemned to ſuffer them.

Various Gods are deſcribed, and various employments alloted them; but the ancients, although totally void of the religious ideas we poſſeſs, concurred in this, that man is a dependant creature, and that his ſoul will be ſenſible after death.

In theſe later days, it has pleaſed the Almighty Creator to permit a light to ſhine upon the world, to diſpel the clouds and darkneſs in which our fore-fathers were loſt.

Bigotry and ſuperſtition have vaniſhed before us; we know ourſelves and our God; and we have no doubt of a futurity; but ſtill we ſee how liable humanity is to err, by obſerving the different opinions of the different nations of the world, in their preſent ideas of God.

Fortunately for us, my brethren, we are in a country where all prejudices are baniſhed; where the firſt doctrines which we are taught are, that we are created beings whom the creator has furniſhed with reaſon, in order to enable us, by applying to it, to judge of what is proper for us. — —And, we likewiſe have the neceſſity of thus applying to, and judging from our own reaſons alone, pointed out to us in a clear and rational manner. No myſterious concealments; no dark interpretations of things which the human mind is incapable of conceiving are here given; nor is the declaration of a belief which a man cannot underſtand, made an article of ſalvation. Nor do we require any of thoſe abſurdities, which our books inform us other nations eſteem of the greateſt conſequence.——Our doctrines are perfectly ſimple, and adapted to every capacity.———We ſay, that there is one God; that he is good and all perfect;——that he made every thing capable of performing what he required from it;———and that the man who acts ſtrictly in conformity with the dictates of his reaſon, cannot be diſpleaſing to his God.

An all-perfect and good ſelfexiſtent being could only begin creation from the deſire of diſpenſing happineſs, and after having provided his creatures with every thing neceſſary thereto, would only lay this command, do not abuſe my bounty.

Man then was created fit for the enjoyment of the things which were provided for his happineſs; and was furniſhed with faculties that would enable him, if properly exerciſed, to conquer thoſe propenſities of his animal nature, which would otherwiſe tend to defeat the end of his being.

The powers of his mind aſſiſt him in ſoaring above this world, and he commands and controuls all the inferior parts of creation with a decided ſuperiority.

It is evident, that God has appointed man to be a free agent, and has left all his actions uncontrouled by any higher power:—From hence, likewiſe it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that thoſe who conduct their lives according to what they muſt know is the will of the creator, will be hereafter rewarded; but that thoſe who act otherwiſe will meet with their deſerts.

Reaſon is a gift from God, but nevertheleſs dependant, in ſome meaſure, upon ourſelves, in as much as due cultivation is neceſſary to bring forth its powers.

By reaſon alone, is man able to know his God, and the firſt duty incumbent upon man, muſt neceſſarily be this, to exerciſe the faculties which he poſſeſſes, to the utmoſt of his power, in order to attain a due knowledge of the creator: — And this ſeems to be required of us, becauſe the deity does not make himſelf known to our ſenſes in any way, except in his works, all of which beſpeak the higheſt wiſdom and power.

When I have reſided in foreign countries, I have been much offended at hearing all arguments on religious ſubjects avoided, by the people declaring, that it was not fit for them to enter upon ſuch ſubjects, becauſe they were unequal to the taſk.

Would they themſelves be ſatisfied with a ſimilar anſwer from any one of their ſervants, whom they had furniſhed with every thing requiſite to fulfil his duty; when cenſuring him for having neglected it would they be ſatisfied with being told?

'That indeed it was true, he had been provided with 'what might, perhaps, be neceſſary, but he could not 'tell that, and therefore he did not try."——They would not;——and yet, they ſuppoſe that the Almighty will not demand of them, why they have not uſed the talent he has given them:——but this, I am afraid, is to be attributed to prieſtcraft.

The clergy in other countries enter into the profeſſion for bread, and if you read their hiſtories, you will find as much traffic in this as in any other article of trade.———Their intereſt it is to keep up their credit, which can be done only by fettering the minds of the laity.

There are many of them who ſpeak of the attributes of the deity with all propriety imaginable, but at the ſame time, they join therewith ſuch abſurdities as tend to deſtroy thoſe attributes.

The truſting to reaſon, is repreſented as highly improper in their auditors who, they ſay, ſhould be ſenſible that they cannot know ſo much as their paſtors, whoſe ſtudies have been entirely devoted to religious enquiries. They diſplay their own learning with all the powers of language, and endeavour to gain full poſſeſſion of the minds of their pariſhioners.———They tell them, this book we read (being the ſame as our bible and teſtament) is a revelation from God; that they muſt believe every thing contained in it.———That it is a damnable offence to doubt it; and that is preſumption to enquire into the truth of its being a revelation from God.——— Thus eſtabliſhing the ſacredneſs of this book, they ſelect parts of it, which they explain according to their intereſt, and are particularly fond of the text,

"The heart of man is deceitful above all things."

from whence they ſhew the impropriety of a man truſting it in judging for himſelf, and they prepare their auditors for whatever they think proper to deliver.

Hence abſurd unintelligible doctrines are taught; and myſteries are propounded; when they find themſelves in a dilemma they produce what they call their authority, which they declare to be the word of God, and therefore true.

That the word of God muſt be true is moſt certain, but whether what they call the word of God is ſo or not, remains to be proved.

Let us briefly examine this; it muſt be admitted, that whatever it pleaſeth God to declare unto men, muſt be of the utmoſt conſequence;———that his declaration muſt be perfectly adapted to their capacities; and that nothing unneceſſary, nothing ſuperfluous would be revealed by God:—Will the books in queſtion ſtand theſe teſts?—*they will not*!

Let us have done with this, and examine further, what is reaſon?

This power of the human mind, which is diſtinguiſhed in its nature from the inſtinct of animals, borders upon it ſo much that it is difficult to draw the line where inſtinct

ends and reaſon begins; yet, we know, that the brute creation do not give any ſigns of ſeveral ideas, which, perhaps every human being poſſeſſes.—reaſon may be beſt defined, the power of comparing and drawing conſequences from ideas that have no immediate connection with the animal œconomy,

By reaſon, we are able to reflect upon our own nature, and from thence, to form ideas of that Being, whoſe eſſence nevertheleſs eſcapes our moſt arduous ſearch;———but the enquiring into his attributes neceſſarily leads us to diſcover his probable intention in creating us; and we readily aſſent to the poſition,—that we are bound to fulfil his will in all things.

We quickly perceive that the human nature poſſeſſes a perfection ſuperior to the reſt of animated creation; and gratitude at leaſt is a return we are bound to make, to God for the favors received; but we cannot do this properly without knowing our real ſituation in this world.

The conſequence of man has been greatly magnified by many writers, while others have repreſented him as a being whoſe follies debaſe him beneath the reſt of animated nature.

The firſt have gone ſo far as to ſay, the Almighty Eternal God looked upon mankind of ſo much value,

as to have been induced to lay down his own life, to redeem them from their ſins.

The latter have raked together all the wickedneſs that was ever committed upon the earth; and in deſcribing man, have painted a true picture of the being of whom we have read under the name of beelzebub.

Were the orb upon which we live, the only one which moved in the regions of ſpace.——Were all the power of the ſupreme exhauſted in this work, we then might give ſome credit to the doctrines of the former.

Or were we ſatisfied, that, having made the world, God had placed upon it a ſet of beings on purpoſe to torment each other, we might then credit the latter; but upon enquiry into both theſe opinions, we ſhall find them partial and contrary to the fact; the one being ignorant of the great Creator; the other excluding all good from the world.

Upon uſing our reaſon, we obtain indubitable proofs of numberleſs other worlds; the work of the ſame ſupreme power who made us and our world; and every ſtar that we ſee, may be the habitation of millions of ſenſible creatures.

What proof can be given us, that God would die to redeem all thoſe worlds? and why ſhould we ſuppoſe he died to redeem this one?——In fact, the doctrine is abſurd.———God cannot die:———He cannot ceaſe to exiſt:——Nor if it was in his power, would all creation be of ſufficient conſequence to occaſion it.———Nor, indeed, could good ariſe therefrom; for the moment that the period ſhould arrive, when God no more exiſted, creation would no longer be upheld, and Chaos would return again.———The people that he laid down his life to ſave, would be deſtroyed for want of his protecting providence; and the reſt of the innocent worlds would periſh, through his cruel kindneſs for a ſmall number of animated beings who had groſsly offended him.

Some men, thinking too highly of themſelves, have credited the doctrine that God did die for man; and have yielded up their reaſon to gratify the pride of their hearts.

Many nations to this day believe, or ſay they believe, the ſame; even the people among whom I was born, though they have cleanſed their religion from many ſuperſtitions, yet have ſuffered this doctrine to remain; but if you look into the lives of theſe people you will find them, in general, paſſed contrary to thoſe directions which they profeſs to believe were left them by their God.

Almoſt every kind of vice is practiſed among them; they injure themſelves; they injure one another; and break through what they declare to be the expreſs commands of their God, with all the ingratitude of that creature which they denominate the devil.—Yet they have the folly to ſay, that faith in the promiſes of Chriſt will waſh away all their ſins.

By them, reaſon and faith are generally ſet in oppoſition to one another, which moſt aſſuredly is very improper; for faith, as one of their authors, juſtly, obſerves, is nothing but a firm conviction, and conſequent aſſent of the mind, which cannot be given to any thing but upon good reaſon.

If a man ſays he believes, and yet does not comprehend his aſſertion, he lies againſt his own ſoul, and his hypocriſy will not be unrewarded;—and he that believes without having any reaſon for his belief, is at beſt but merely in love with his own fancies; but ſurely he does not do juſtice to himſelf, nor does he pay a proper obedience to his maker, who would have him uſe thoſe diſcerning faculties he has given him to keep him out of errors.

True religion proceeds from a juſt ſenſe of the creator; not that it is poſſible for man to form perfect ideas of this ſelfexiſtent being, for God is incomprehenſible

to our prefent nature, and all that we know of him is negative.

We are not able to declare what he is, but we know what he is not; and therefore our minds being fatisfied that he cannot be imperfect, firmly declare his attributes of perfection.

Being free from unworthy ideas of the moft higheft, we, my friends, aflure ourfelves that the creator is beft pleafed, when the univerfal harmony he planned is undeftroyed by thofe beings, whofe happinefs depends upon the uninterrupted exchange of benefits which he intended fhould take place throughout all creation; and we believe that God made all things fufficiently perfect to accomplifh the purpofes expected from them.

Let me therefore entreat you all to exercife your reafon; ftudy to improve it; apply to it in all things, and pray to your creator, that he will affift you in all your difficulties: Seek to know him;—acquaint yourfelves with his attributes;—and walk humbly before him, in virtue, all the days of your lives.

## DISCOURSE THE SECOND.

WE will devote this morning to the contemplation of the attributes of the Almighty and inviſible Creator; and to the conſideration of the principal different religions of mankind.

The mind, when firſt impelled to endeavour to acquaint itſelf with the divine eſſence, is aſtoniſhed at the incomprehenſibility of it, and almoſt giving up the attempt, acknowledges at once, the greatneſs, wiſdom, and power of the ſelfexiſtent:——And like the eye, which has incautiouſly looked againſt the ſun, is overpowered with the refulgent ſplendor that breaks upon it.

Let not preſumption ever enter into our hearts; but as rational beings, let us, with humility, reverence, and fearful love, ſo uſe the faculties which the omnipotent hath given us, that when an account ſhall be required from us, we may prove ourſelves to have been not unprofitable ſtewards.

If man has any ſuperiority over the reſt of the world, it is in thoſe gifts whereby he is rendered capable of knowing the goodneſs of his God; and in the due cultivation of thoſe bleſſings ought man to employ the greateſt part of his time:——Nor need he fear exerciſing

his powers to too great an extent, for thoſe things which are improper for man to know can never be diſcovered by him.

The attribute of God, which naturally preſents itſelf to our view whenever we turn our thoughts towards the conſideration of his being is Selfexiſtence ; but of this we can form no clear ideas.

All our knowledge ariſes from experience, and that combination of ideas, which proceeds from the recollection of thoſe objects which have affected our ſenſes.—We perceive every object of our ſenſes to be an effect ; not one being indued with the power of ſelf-creation ;—and therefore we are convinced that there is a firſt ſelfexiſtent cauſe who is inviſible.—Thus far our reaſon abſtractedly diſcovers, but our ſouls are ſeldom content ; and we examine further into the nature of this firſt cauſe.

Selfexiſtence, we are ſoon ſatisfied only belongs to one ; yet has the argument been ſometimes maintained in the ſchools, that there is more than one ſelfexiſtent being ; but this ſeems mere logical ſubtlety, which no body can prove or refute, owing to our total ignorance of the nature of ſelfexiſtence ; and, if we apply to our reaſon, we ſhall receive this ſolution,—if there be two ſelfexiſtent beings, they muſt be independent ; and they muſt have ſeparate governments ; we being an effect, muſt proceed from one firſt cauſe, who, with reſpect

to us, is ſolely ſelfexiſtent:——There is then but one ſelfexiſtent being.

Nothing on earth is free from certain regulations: nothing is independent of particular ones: we ſee the whole is ordered in the beſt manner poſſible, which clearly denotes infinite wiſdom and power in the great firſt cauſe.

Birth and weakneſs are every where conjoined; every thing at firſt is in a ſtate of growth; and different periods are aſſigned to different creatures, ere they attain their greateſt perfection; at this time there ſeems to be a ſmall ſtop, but ſoon decay commences, quickly after the creature looſes its powers, its component parts gradually periſh and ſeem to vaniſh from our ſight.

That this regular courſe may be kept up, all creatures are permitted to continue their ſpecies when they arrive at certain periods of perfection; and the care of its off-ſpring is rendered abſolutely neceſſary to the happineſs of every part of the animal creation.

To theſe regulations man is alſo ſubject:—He is born, he dies, his fleſh rots, his bones decay, and duſt is all that remains of his ſo glorious being.——So ſoon as his pulſe has ceaſed to beat, and his breath has departed

from him, his body becomes a wretched corpſe, and no experiments of tortures can make him ſhew the leaſt appearance of ſenſe.

The brute creation and mankind are here on an equality, their ends bearing the ſtrongeſt ſimilitude; ſome die in pain, others finiſh their lives without a ſtruggle; but none eſcape this inevitable doom of death.

If we examine into the internal ſtructure of men and animals, and call to our aſſiſtance the experience of the anatomiſt, we ſhall find the ſame regular conformity; bones to ſupport the muſcles; muſcles and ſinews appointed to give actions to the bones; and a brain to direct the action.

Even in this ſeat of ſenſe, the brain, do the ſame appearances preſent themſelves unto us; nor can we point out an anatomical difference, to aſſign a reaſon why other animals are not furniſhed with equal powers to man.

Our wants are the ſame; and if I may be allowed the expreſſion, a ſimilar diſſimilarity is diſcoverable in our tempers. —— Whence then ariſes the difference?

Solely, may we anſwer, from the permiſſion of God!

It will be perceived by the attentive enquirer, that the earth is filled with a regular chain of creatures;

and that the three grand ſyſtems, animal, vegetable, and mineral are wonderfully linked together, although their moſt perfect parts ſeem totally diſtinct.

Man, who is clearly the head of every being that lives upon this earth, ſeems poſſeſſed of one grand diſtinction, which ſeparates him from all the reſt;—that is, the uſe of ſpeech in its full extent, nor can any other diſtinction be found ſufficiently declaratory of his ſpecies. For the link which joins him to the brute creation, has been known to give proofs of having reflecting powers, more extended than are found in many men.

Moſt creatures utter ſounds, but they are only expreſſive of their preſent paſſions, while man reflecting on thoſe paſt events which did not any ways affect him, declares his thoughts of future occurrences with clearneſs and preciſion:—In ſhort, he proves his title to the faculty we call reaſon, is thereby alone diſtinguiſhed from other created animals, and is thereby enabled to know his God.

By the due cultivation of his reaſon, man makes himſelf worthy of the ſtation which he is called to fill in the univerſe; and by neglect of it he debaſes himſelf to a level with the brutes, who do not ſeem to be acquainted with a deity.

As there cannot be a doubt in the mind of any thinking perſon, of the ſelfexiſtence of God, although inexplicable by us, let us next conſider his other attributes.

The attribute of omnipotence is given him from all our faculties evincing his title to it.———For can the eye which has beheld the face of the earth and has ſeen the ſtars, with all the glory of the heavens? Can the mind which has been uſed to reflect on all ſpace being filled with creation, and has looked upon the ſun, as it really is, the immenſe fountain of heat and light to a ſyſtem of worlds, revolving round it in regular ſtated periods; to which ſyſtem our earth belongs? ——Can this mind refrain from exclaiming? how great is thy power O God! Truly thou art omnipotent! It ſurely cannot; and in this point of view the omnipotence of God ſtrikes us in the moſt forcible manner.

The wiſdom of God is ſufficiently proved, by the harmony that is perceptible throughout all nature; every thing being at once aſſiſting and aſſiſted;——not one neceſſary or want can be diſcovered unprovided for, and uſe and comfort are every where conjoined.

God's attribute of omnipreſence or being every where, ariſes from the conviction we feel within us, that if the providence of the deity were at any period abſent

from his works, they muſt inevitably fall to ruin:—— Beſides, from this, proceeds his attribute of omniſcience, or knowledge of all things, and theſe are ſo intimately connected, that if we could deny the one we muſt object to the other, which would argue a manifeſt imperfection in that being who is all-perfect.

Immortality, or eternal duration is another attribute of God, and is equally as inconceivable to man as ſelf-exiſtence; but nevertheleſs, the mind agrees to it, becauſe it feels its own limited powers, and becauſe it is ſatisfied that the ſelfexiſtent can never die.

Of the goodneſs of God, the world itſelf furniſhes us with proofs, which ſpeak to our reaſon and addreſs us through our ſenſes. How admirably adapted to the comforts of his creatures, has he provided every thing which is neceſſary for their well being! The food we take, not only recruits our ſtrength, but affords us pleaſing ſenſation while we eat it; and our ſleep is the effect of the bleſſing of a good creator, who wills the happineſs of his creatures.———All our ſenſes are the inlets of delights, and we are formed for joy and for gratitude.———Yet it has been aſked by many people of other nations, why is there unhappineſs in the world?——How does it agree with the goodneſs of God to ſuffer pain and diſeaſe?

To ſuch queſtions I have anſwered——ye have not known God?

Unhappineſs is far from being a deſtined lot of humanity.———Pain and diſeaſe are generally attendants upon our offences againſt our nature, and are not to be mentioned as an imputation upon the goodneſs of the omnipotent.

This orb, it is true, is filled with mortals, whoſe infirmities make them complain, and our nature is indeed liable to accidents, no human being can avoid. But to the errors, the ignorance, and vices of mankind, are to be aſcribed the chief of the evils of which man complains.——Man does not take the proper ſteps to avoid them; in fact he ſeems to ſeek them, and then, too often, impiouſly charges the ſupreme with want of goodneſs.

From whence do the horrors of war, which lay whole countries in ruin, proceed? but from man's injuſtice and ambition.

From whence come the chief diſeaſes of his body? but from his intemperance and imprudence.———This nation bears witneſs to the goodneſs of God; but its virtues are conſpicuous among all nations.

Which of our children would ſuffer unavailing lamentations, or impious ejaculations to paſs their lips, becauſe they accidentally felt pain? not one!

they may ſigh from the exquiſiteneſs of torture, but their minds will never harbour a thought againſt the goodneſs of our God.——Conſcious of favors before received, and which they make no doubt will in future be repeated; their preſent painful interval, they hope, will not be long, and they find comfort in the thought, that their God is not diſpleaſed with their reſignation.

From ignorance alone can the doubts of the goodneſs of God have proceeded,——and from this cauſe, have ariſen the errors of mankind:——How careful then ought we to be to cultivate our reaſon!——How ſuſpicious of thoſe doctrines which teach us to fear to uſe it!

How good does the character of that man ſeem, who expends all his ſuperfluous wealth in aſſiſting the poor and needy!——We admire the man and we approve his conduct!——But how far doth the goodneſs of God, as diſplayed through all the world, exceed every thing of which human nature is capable!——Amply has he furniſhed this world with whatever is deſirable by man, and he has permitted him the free uſe of every thing, with merely the prohibition, that he ſhould abuſe nothing.

Gratitude is due from man to God for even the pains he ſuffers, as thereby he is checked in many things,

which he would otherwiſe heedleſsly purſue to his ruin; And this will appear clear to the reflecting mind, *that if any* alteration ſhould be made in our *nature*, the animal *man would be loſt* to creation.

For, throughout the whole ſyſtem with which we are acquainted we cannot find any part of ſpace either unuſeful or wanting of inhabitants.—Progreſſive perfection is clearly ſeen, and man ſtands confeſſed the ſuperior animal, whoſe exiſtence is appointed to be on the earth.

The human mind, unconfined within its earthly dwellings, ſoars above the limits of this world, and ſees innumerable orbs ſuſpended as it were in the heavens;—judging from every thing on earth, it does not heſitate to believe that the God, who has ſo artfully and amply filled this globe with every thing adapted to it, has not left thoſe ſplendid orbs unoccupied by creatures who may know their God:——Thus our reaſon readily concludes, that there are other beings in other worlds, poſſeſſing equal or ſuperior powers to thoſe of man; and that, if man were rendered more perfect than he at preſent is, he would become a different ſpecies of creature, and would partake of a nature adapted to another ſituation. Even in this, therefore, is the goodneſs of God ſtill viſible.

In all probability, there are a continued chain of beings riſing in a regular progreſſion towards perfection, till

the links ſtop at the unpaſſable bound, which muſt ever be between created nature and the incommunicable attributes of the deity, *viz.* ſelfexiſtence, omnipotence and full perfection.

Often have I explored the regions of immeaſurable ſpace in order to find the particular habitation of my God: I have examined the planets that revolve around the ſun, and the ſtars that are fixed in the remoteſt diſtances. — I have fancied to myſelf ſtill other worlds, harmoniouſly ſituate at like enormous diſtances, even beyond the fixed ſtars; but yet, no place could I conceive worthy the favor of the creator's particular preſence. Loſt and bevildered in the idea, I have ſhrunk from the contemplation, and retiring within myſelf, my reaſon has informed me that the ſearch was vain; for that the eſſence of the deity is inconceivable to human nature, our ſenſes not being adapted to this knowledge: But the attempt was not totally void of benefit; I found my mind capable of ſoaring into other worlds above the earth. —— I had paſſed in idea, from one to another; I perceived life and ſenſe throughout the whole; and I ſaw the proofs of the greatneſs of my God.——Incapable of long ſupporting theſe thoughts, my mind has turned to the conſideration of its own nature, and of the ways of my fellow creatures:—I have obſerved every nation differing in their opinions of God, while all were guilty of errors that tended to defeat what has appeared to me his deſign in creation.

The duty of employing my abilities, in order to avoid error, appeared in the ſtrongeſt point of view; and I determined to examine freely into the opinions of every nation, and afterwards to draw my own concluſions.

The people among whom I was born call themſelves chriſtians and declare their belief, that God came down upon earth in the form of a man, took upon himſelf our nature, and ſuffered the people he was among to deſtroy him as an impoſtor.

Other nations deny that it was God who came upon earth, but only a prophet, who was ſent to prepare the way for a greater prophet, who was to ſcourge mankind for their ſins :—and who, when he came, propagated his religion with fire and the ſword, and declared that there is but one God, that himſelf was his prophet, to whom God frequently revealed his will, which he as conſtantly publiſhed to the people.

One ſect I find diſperſed through all the world, without king, government, or poſſeſſion of territory; hated by the reſt of mankind, yet calling themſelves the favoured nation of God;——their writings declaring, that, in former times, God had perſonal communication with ſome of their nation, and that he inſpired their prophets with the knowledge of future events.———This nation, even according to

their own accounts, were impious and wicked, continually forgetting their God, who had mercifully declared unto them his laws, which they perpetually tranſgreſſed.———Wearied with their ſins, God, at at length, is ſaid to have pronounced a curſe upon them, and to have diſperſed them, a race of vagabonds over the face of the earth, unverſally deſpiſed and deteſted by the reſt of mankind;—until after a period of years expiration ſhall be paſſed, when they expect to be reſtored to their ancient kingdom.

Other nations there are who worſhip images, the works of their own hands, and pray to them in all their diſtreſſes.

To me it affords a cauſe for grief, when I conſider humanity in this inferior ſtate, and I ſigh with compaſſion at the thought; but at the ſame time my gratitude is raiſed towards my God, who called me into being, in a nation, and at a time, when religious enquiry was unfettered by the reſtraints of bigotry and ſuperſtition.

To paint to oneſelf the poor idolator, cutting from the foreſt a tree that pleaſeth him,—lopping its boughs, warming himſelf by the fire he has made with them, and worſhipping the trunk from which he has taken them,—is a picture that is far from affording plea-

ſure. — Nor indeed could we ſuppoſe it poſſible for human nature to be ſo blind, but, that we know it for a fact, that at this preſent time, whole nations are in this ſtate of blindneſs.

The abſurdity of this worſhip is ſelf-evident, and I turn again my attention to the Jewiſh religion.

The Jews ſay that the bible was written by the particular inſpiration of God, and they call it the book of their law. ——They inform us, according to this book, that there was a man named Moſes, to whom God communicated what had paſſed from the beginning of the world, and whom he commanded to write the account for the benefit of his nation.

In the firſt chapter of Geniſis, we are informed of the nature of the creation of the world; which according to that account, was performed by the almighty, about ſix thouſand years ago, before which time the earth was without form and void.

God was ſix days making the world, and furniſhing it with living creatures, and the ſeventh day he reſted from his work, as if he was fatigued.——He made man, the laſt of all his creatures, the moſt

favored of any, to him he gave dominion over all the reſt——and he called his name Adam.

God now perceived that he had forgotten to make Adam a companion, and that it was not good for him to be alone, ſo he cauſed him to fall into a deep ſleep, took out one of his ribs, and made of it a woman, to be man's companion and helper.—Theſe were created immortal, and lived in a place of infinite beauty and delight:—And God gave them liberty to eat of every thing that grew upon the face of the earth, but of the fruit of one tree, which he prohibited them from taſting upon pain of death.

The man and woman lived together but a little time before a ſerpent addreſſed the woman, and prevailed upon her to break the commands of God, by eating this fruit; which, when ſhe had taſted it, ſhe gave to the man, who did likewiſe eat. The effect of this fruit was to make them know that they were naked.

God coming in the cool of the evening to converſe with Adam, does not immediately find him, therefore calls to him, and, upon receiving an anſwer, aſks him why he did not come to him at firſt? Adam replies, he was aſhamed! becauſe he was naked! God, upon enquiry, then diſcovers, that through the wiles of the ſerpent, they had eaten of the forbidden fruit; he is

therefore very angry and curſes the ſerpent, the man, the woman and the whole earth, and drives them out of paradiſe.

We have afterwards an account of God's ſons, who are repreſented to find the daughters of men ſo fair as to take them to wife; and ſoon afterwards the world grows ſo wicked, that God repents that he had made man, and therefore drowns them all but one man and his family, who, with a pair of every living creature, are preſerved in an ark.

The world again becomes full of inhabitants, who forget their God, and act with ſimilar wickedneſs with thoſe who were before the deluge.

God chuſes one people, to whom he particularly declares himſelf, yet ſo bad does he ſeem to have made his choice, that this people are continually acting contrary to his commandments, and are perpetually leaving the worſhip of God, to join in the ſacrifices of the heathen and idolatrous nations.—— Many miracles, many ſignal inſtances of his power is God ſtated to have ſhewn this favored people, yet nothing will prevent their ſins.

How ſurprizing to us doth it appear, when we learn that the man to whom God, according to the bible, firſt gave authority to write the ſcriptures, was a murderer :———the man whom he called

from a cottage to a palace, was an adulterer.—— the man to whom he gave the greateſt wiſdom, became at laſt an idolator.

Cruelty marks the reigns of almoſt all their kings;— their prophets could not depend upon each other; as murders and crimes of every kind were as frequently committed by the Jews as by the heathen nations. And, notwithſtanding, their prophets were continually exclaiming againſt their ſins, and threatening them with the wrath of the moſt high, yet did they commit offences, even at the inſtant of the exhibition of puniſhment.

The Jews profeſs to believe, that every thing contained in the books of their prophets l be fulfilled, and that they are now ſuffering perſecution for their forefathers ſins; but that a king will hereafter be born, who ſhall rule over them with ſplendor, and ſhall reſtore their kingdom to its ancient glory.

The chriſtians, whoſe religion is from the Jews, believe with them in the truth of the bible, but ſay, that the Iſraelites are in an error with reſpect to their expectation of a king: that the perſon who was fore-told by their prophets, has already been upon earth, but that they did not know him in conſequence of having perſuaded themſelves that his kingdom was to be temporal, where

as it was ſtrictly ſpiritual;—this perſon, the Jews looked upon as an impoſtor, and deſtroyed by nailing him upon a croſs.

The perſon thus crucified by the Jews, the chriſtians aſſert, was no other than the moſt high God, the creator; who, from before the beginning of the world, foreſaw the wickedneſs and fall of man; and planned his redemption, by a ſcheme of taking upon himſelf our fleſh, becoming man, and ſubmitting to die upon the croſs; this, they contend, was foretold by the Jewiſh prophets.

The ſon of God; the ſon of Man; God himſelf; the eternal Father; are titles thoſe people give him, and they declare their belief, that there is one God compoſed of three diſtinct perſons, whom they denominate Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt: ——Theſe three compoſe but one God, yet are perfectly diſtinct; and they ſay, that the trinity in unity, and the unity in trinity is to be worſhipped, neither confounding the perſons, nor dividing the ſubſtance.

They pray to the Father and to the Son equally, yet call the Son the Mediator; they ſuppoſe him continually employed in making interceſſion for mankind, who are every moment offending; yet, at the ſame

time, they say that the sacrifice of his life was accepted by the Father, in full satisfaction for the sins of mankind.

They baptise their children in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and believe, that without baptism, they do not receive the benefits of Christ's death.

They affirm that Christ will come again to judge the world; when, although he by his death, made full satisfaction for the sin of Adam, Yet, those who have committed evil will nevertheless be sent into everlasting fire, while those who have done good will be received into the kingdom of heaven.

The Father, they say is made of none, neither created nor begotten; the son is of the father alone, not made nor created, but begotten; and that he was begotten before the world, yet born in the world. The holy ghost is of the father, and of the son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

They seem to believe that the Father is generally in heaven, that he made the world and all things by the son, and that the holy ghost is sometimes in heaven, sometimes on earth.

This doctrine of the trinity they call a *myſtery revealed* by God, and although *incomprehenſible*, yet neceſſary to be believed.

Chriſt they ſay is God, yet was begotten, but the father was not begotten; and inſiſt upon the utmoſt credit being given to this, although they confeſs that it is unintelligible.

If you attempt to argue with them, that as according to their opinions, there is but one God, therefore it cannot be improper to worſhip him under any of theſe titles; and as you do not conceive the doctrine of the trinity, God cannot be offended with you, when you addreſs him ſolely as the creator.

To this they reply, that as God has revealed himſelf under the title of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, it is wicked not to believe him.———If you require to know how they prove that this was revealed by God, they ſay it is to be found in the ſcriptures; and they will not ſuffer a doubt of their authenticity.

Chriſt, whom they at all times declare to be the eternal God, at the laſt ſupper of his diſciples, when he deſired them to celebrate it in remembrance of him, took the bread, brake it, and made uſe of theſe words—This

is my body!—and when he took the cup, he called the wine, his blood; from hence many chriſtian nations maintain," that in the communion, the bread is tranſubſtantiated and becomes the very body of Chriſt.

But although this miracle is ſaid to be performed every day by Chriſt, yet, I never heard that he ever produced a miracle, to prove to all men that this was indeed the caſe, which would aſtoniſhingly facilitate the propagation of the goſpel.

According to the accounts of all chriſtian nations, God made man, knowing him to be about to offend him, yet, which man would not do without he ſhould eat of the fruit of a particular tree.

God, inſtead of ſimply deſtroying the tree,—thereby preventing the ſinning of adam.—thereby ſaving thouſands of ſouls from hell fire, and thereby rendering the effect of his own intended ſufferings, ſure and certain in the firſt inſtance—permits the tree to remain—permits man to eat of it—is offended with him for what he knew man could not help—afterwards ſuffers himſelf to be crucified for the redemption of mankind, yet, takes no ſteps to prevent any further wickedneſs from entering the world, which to this day continues to produce wicked men.

Theſe chriſtians ſeem to have full belief in the pagan power of fate, which was ſuperior to their Gods, and they render the one ſupreme, as much its ſubject as were formerly the gods of the heathens; and their prieſts by preventing the laity from exerciſing the faculties which God has given them, are enabled to continue them in ſuch a ſtate of confidential blindneſs, as beſt anſwers their intereſted ſchemes.

The chriſtians are divided into various ſects, who maintain different principles of faith; to their own each gives unlimited aſſent, and all bring proofs of the truth of their own opinions from the ſame bible and teſtament, and likewiſe from them do they refute the doctrines of the others.———Their teachers contend with great virulence againſt one another, but none can convince their adverſaries; hence we may conclude that the inſtructions in the bible and teſtament, which are eſteemed by them the particular revelations of God, are not ſo clear as might be expected to proceed from the omniſcient, whoſe natural laws are ſo regular and perfect.

The Mahometans, who take their name from their prophet Mahomet, or Mohammed, are of the lateſt religion that has been formed.

Mahomet lived in the ſeventh century, P. C. and publiſhed his doctrines, as being immediate revelations of God.

He affirmed in oppoſition to the Chriſtian trinity, that there was but one God, and that himſelf was his prophet.

That Chriſt was indeed a teacher ſent from God; and that, as mankind would not receive the meek doctrines of Jeſus, himſelf was ſent by God, with ſword and fire, to force mankind to a knowledge of true religion.——Mahomet therefore raiſed an army, and put to death whoever refuſed to acknowledge him as the prophet of the moſt higheſt, or who did not receive his writings as the expreſs communications of God.

The koran was written by him, or perhaps by his direction: for one reaſon why he commands belief in it, and which he mentions, as a proof of its truth, is, that he, bein gan unlettered man, could not have compoſed ſo elegant a work, without aid: the koran bears in many parts, a ſtrong reſemblance with the bible and Mahomet is ſaid to have been aſſiſted in forming it by a jew.

Mahomet gives ſeveral accounts of miraculous events that happened to him, ſuch as being carried up into heaven, of whoſe diſtance he gives a particular account; alſo of the ſplendor of the different regions, with the gates and guards that ſeparate them; all theſe he particularly relates, and delcares, that once he had a great many thouſands converſations with God, yet

the time he was gone from the earth was ſo ſhort, that when he returned, his bed was not cold, nor was all the water run out of a pitcher, that ſtood by his bed-ſide, and was thrown down by the animal, which carried him to God.

The people Mahomet was among were much addicted to ſenſual pleaſures, and therefore, in his deſcription of paradiſe, he painted thoſe delicious, luxurious ſcenes, which he knew would captivate his followers, and he compoſed his whole religion upon the ſame principles.

Himſelf was much addicted to women, but, his adulteries becoming offenſive to the people, he wrote a particular chapter of the koran, as from God, authoriſing his prophet to indulge himſelf in every gratification.

Mahometaniſm is a mixture of judaiſm and chriſtianity, joined with ſuch doctrines as Mahomet perceived would be neceſſary, to accompliſh his ambitious deſigns;——and his plan ſucceeded ſo well, that he raiſed himſelf, almoſt miraculouſly, from a very low ſtation, to the higheſt that human nature can poſſibly fill.

From the examination of theſe principal religions, it is certain that God is not rightly known, by moſt of the inhabitants of the world; for if we look to the God of Mahomet, we ſee him delighting in cruelty

and punifhing in the commonality offences which he permits to his favourite.

If to the God of the jews, a Being of all power and fore-knowledge, condemning a creature whom he had formed immortal to death for yielding to a temptation which he had purpofely put in his way; angry, yet forgiving; proud and jealous, yet merciful;—juft, yet changing his judgment,—chufing one people as a favoured nation, to whom he might reveal himfelf; yet do we find his people putting lefs confidence in him, than the heathen nations do in their idols.

If to the God of the chriftians, a Being of infinite perfection, determining from all eternity to form a creature, whofe wickednefs he forefaw would be fo great, as to be no otherways done away, except by himfelf lowering his divine nature, and fubmitting to death. And this he is faid to have done; yet man has not been freed from fin, for his children are to this moment tranfgreffing, and are equally imperfect as they were before this facrifice.

## DISCOURSE the THIRD.

In the leſſon we read this morning, we found theſe words.

"But as for me and my Houſe, we will ſerve the Lord."

If there is any ſubject that demands the particular attention of mankind, it is religion.

Religion ariſes from the ideas we have of a ſuperior Being, and means the worſhip which we think ourſelves bound to pay to him; but unleſs we have proper ideas of this Being, the ſervices that we intend to render to him, will neceſſarily be unworthy of him.

O Almighty God, who knoweſt the hearts of men, and art alone the judge of the motives to our actions; look with favor on thy humble ſervant, who wiſhes to exert the faculties thou haſt given him towards gaining ſuch a knowledge of thee, as will make him more able and more deſirous to fulfil thy will in all things.———Thou ſeeſt into all his deſigns; thou art ſenſible of the exalted ideas he has of thy nature; thou knoweſt the prejudices he may have to come.——Enable him, O Lord! humbly to ſeek thy kingdom;

and not putting any implicit faith in the opinions of man, but truſting ſolely in thee, grant that he may be able to ſee through the clouds and darkneſs, which overſhadow the earth! and that he may know, and fear, and ſerve thee the only God, to thy glory, and to the happineſs of all thy creatures upon earth. Amen.

This day, my friends, I intend to deliver to you ſome reflections extracted from my manuſcripts, which I wrote before I left England; and which will explain to you the ideas that I had upon religious ſubjects:—I ſhall make no alterations, becauſe they were written when my mind was filled with the perſuaſion that the world was in an error; and you will perceive from them, in what manner it ſeemed to free itſelf from the prejudices of education.

The chriſtian religion is that in which I was brought up, I admire its inſtructions; I hope I am a true chriſtian:——but I cannot approve or aſſent to all the doctrines of our teachers, and I doubt of many of their moſt material tenets.

The bible and teſtament I cannot look upon as being immediately from God;——We learn from hiſtory, the council which ſanctioned the latter;——we likewiſe are informed that there were other goſpels beſides thoſe of the

four Evangeliſts;——if they were written by inſpiration, what authority had the council to reject any?——But the goſpels are evidently the works of men;—corrected and ſelected by men;——and as they admit of miracles, let me aſk whether any miracle has been performed to prove that they are entirely approved of by the Almighty? ¶ During my life, I have ſeen no perſonal interpoſition of providence;——I do not look upon the whole earth of ſufficient conſequence to require it.——Generally immutable laws are every where evident to me, and altho' my ſenſes are limited, my ideas ſcarce know a boundary.

All ſpace appears full of the greatneſs of my God. Worlds beyond worlds!—Syſtems beyond ſyſtems! innumerable myriads of creations appear in the mirror of my eye; I feel the majeſty of the omnipotent, and I exclaim, O Lord! what is man?—A wonderful being as a creature, but ſtill of very ſmall conſequence in compariſon with the reſt of creation!

Perſuaded as I am of the greatneſs of God; of the inſignificance of man; and of there being numberleſs other worlds; can I readily give my aſſent to a tale, which I am

told, that the ſon of God, God himſelf, came down from heaven to viſit mankind; to experience our nature; to take upon himſelf our fleſh; to ſuffer death for to cleanſe mankind from their ſins? —— I cannot.

The doctrine of the divinity of Chriſt is not implicitly to be believed:—If Chriſt was the eternal God, a ſtrict examination will prove to his glory; and without having duly examined it, the profeſſors of this belief, whenever they make this declaration of faith, offer inſult inſtead of honor to that auguſt Being, who, they ſay, took upon himſelf our fleſh.

It appears an improbability; it does not come home to my reaſon to admit, that my God ſhould deign to viſit the earth in a human form;——but ſuppoſing, for a moment, that he ſhould, this do I feel convinced of, that his condeſcenſion muſt have the greateſt end in view:——That the means employed by him would be the beſt that could be deviſed,—and that the effect would be certain:

When I aſk the motive of his coming upon earth? The anſwer is, to ſave the world. As man, I acknowledge the deſign to be great and momentous.——I enquire how he accompliſhed it? By ſhewing himſelf upon earth as man,——telling the jews of their ſins, preach-

ing a future immortal ſtate, where puniſhments and rewards were prepared,—ſetting an example of perfect life, offering himſelf up as a ſacrifice for ſin, and yielding up his life upon a croſs.——To whom does he offer up this ſacrifice? to God.——But it is ſaid that Chriſt is the ſole omnipotent being,—that himſelf and the father are as one—if ſo, what was the value of the ſacrifice?—it was nothing! for God cannot die;——if Chriſt was God, his death was a deception.

But granting that he was the Lord God omnipotent; granting that he did die;——Let me aſk, muſt not this ſacrifice have been ample? aſſuredly—could God have been deceived in the effect? certainly not.——What then has been the advantage?——Are men reſtored to their immortality?—Is ſin taken away from the world? no,—men are ſtill wicked, and ſtill yield up their lives to death.

Do even all men know theſe doctrines? are they now more ſtudious to do the will of God?——We preach againſt their impieties, and thereby fully anſwer the queſtion.

Did God come to ſave the world in general, or only a particular part?——If in general the facts appear, he came ſo like a man, that few could tell the difference, and even his chief diſciple denied him in

the hour of danger.——— He ſhewed himſelf to but one people, and but for a ſhort ſpace of time: he ſuffered this people to doubt of his divinity, and at length to prove his mortality, by abſolutely killing him. Now we are told, that he has threatened them with puniſhment for not believing that he was God, even when they had ſeen him die;———How inferior to my ideas of God!

If miracles are to prove the interference of the deity, their effect cannot be futile.———God cannot be miſtaken; they muſt be neceſſary, and muſt produce the deſtined end.———If God had come upon earth to ſave all mankind, he certainly would not have concealed himſelf from the greater part of the univerſe; and if he expected belief in himſelf, he would have prevented the poſſibility of doubt, by making himſelf known to all nations; which miraculous effect of the divine power, would have been worthy the greatneſs and goodneſs of our God, and all mankind would have been benefited by it.

But to ſay, that God himſelf came down from heaven, took upon himſelf our nature, bore our infirmities, ſuffered death for our ſakes, yet permitted $\frac{999+}{1000+}$ parts of the world to be ignorant of his being upon earth, no ways accords with my ideas of the omnipotent That he ſhould fail in rendering mankind more virtuous, appears to me, likewiſe an

improbability, and I am induced to conclude, that the title of the ſole God, being given to Chriſt, is a clear and certain corruption of man.

I read the ſcriptures, I admire the doctrines therein contained, and that which I believe to be the religion which Chriſt wiſhed to eſtabliſh, receives my fulleſt aſſent, and my reaſon approves of it; —— I acknowledge its beauty, its ſimplicity.—and I lament that the effect which it would have, if truly preached, is deſtroyed thro' the ſuperſtructures of ignorant or deſigning men.———It gives us juſt notions of God; and his attributes, of man's duties to God; to his neighbour and himſelf: and the morality which Chriſt preached would, if duly practiſed, be productive of happineſs, both in this world, and in that which is to come.

By ſome perſons it may be eſteemed preſumptuous, to ſay that man can form any idea of the intentions of God in the creation of the world; but I am perſuaded, that if his reaſon were properly exerted, the diſcoveries which he is able to make, would appear incredible to thoſe, who have been bred up in the fear of uſing the powers, which yet they believe themſelves to poſſeſs.

God has ſurely given me reaſon, in order that I ſhould uſe it, and I am determined to exerciſe it

in a free examination of all things, until my Heavenly Father ſhall prove to me his diſapprobation, by not permitting me to have clear ideas of that which I ſeek, but which he does not chuſe that I ſhould know.

I will look into the hiſtories of the world, the writings and opinions of the different nations——I will combine the ideas which I receive, and will freely declare thoſe truths of which I am convinced.

It is clear that there is a God;—every thing proves it;—the more we examine into nature, the more we are convinced of his wiſdom and power.

The animated world is a regular chain of improving creatures, and forms a moſt admirable work.——This ſyſtem of revolving orbs, to which our earth belongs, ſtill further proves the greatneſs of our Creator, and we even cannot doubt of a God.

What then is man? — An animal endued with reaſon.

What is Reaſon?——A faculty whereby we are enabled either to combine or ſeparate the ideas which our animal ſenſes convey to us; and alſo to form new combinations that may produce ideas which are not the objects of the animal ſenſes.

Have we any innate ideas ?—None ; all our ideas arife from fenfation, reflection, and communication ; we are therefore juftified in cautioufly examining any new idea ; and we may either give our aflent or may object to it, according to the conviction which we feel of its being true or falfe.

God made the world, and all that it contains ;—as he was not under an indifpenfible neceffity of doing it, 'tis clear his own will was alone confulted. And, finding every thing provided for the happinefs of the creature, we readily aflent to the doctrine, that God in his plan willed, that his creatures fhould be happy.

We fee unhappinefs in the world, we wonder that God fhould fuffer it ; but upon examining further, we find it to be a neceffary confequence of that free agency which God has chofen to permit his creatures to enjoy, and which his immutability will not fuffer him to revoke. Man is thereby made to inflict upon himfelf the punifhment that his follies have deferved.

We know but little of the firft ages of the world.—The memory of a man is but a bad repofitory for events, and his mind is a book which is liable to continual error : thus may we juftly fuppofe, that no tradition was ever handed through feveral generations without alteration or addition ;—the fon's opinion, in fome inftances, differed perhaps from the father's, and he re-

lated to his children that which he thought was right; but when writing was invented, then was a new ſenſe given to man. But the art at firſt was confined to a very few, and manuſcripts were in the poſſeſſion of a ſmall number of perſons.

From this want of true accounts has ariſen different opinions of the time of the creation of the world, ſome people fixing it thouſands of years before others.—The account which we have in our Bible of this event, is a fine deſcription, but upon examining it we ſhall find it ſo unphiloſophical, that we ſhall be under the neceſſity of attributing it to the ſtrength of Moſes' imagination, rather than to the revelation of God.

Could we paint to ourſelves all ſpace in confuſion, and the Omnipotent as if waking out of a dream, determining to make a univerſe merely for the ſake of man, we might give credit to the relation of the lights of heaven being made the fourth day; but when aſtronomical obſervations prove to us the real ſize of the ſun and ſtars, and hiſtory convinces us of the ignorance of former ages, who can help exclaiming, correct thyſelf, thou new enlightened creature! Far be it from thee to aſſert that God made theſe ſolely for thy uſe.——Thou canſt no where diſcover another ſuch uſeleſs exertion of power!

God is the God of all; his wiſdom, his greatneſs, and his power, are without bounds. From the diſcoveries which we, in theſe later ages, have made, by the aſſiſtance of inſtruments, which have given new ſenſes unto us, enabling us more clearly to know the works of our creator, we are convinced that thoſe orbs which our fore-fathers ſuppoſed were made for enlightning the earth, are, in reallity, other worlds, ſubjected to revolutions ſimilar to our world. Nor is it abſurd to ſuppoſe them to be filled with living creatures, who partake of the bounty of their God.

All nature acknowledges a ſupreme :—his goodneſs is viſible throughout all his works.—How admirably adapted is every thing for accompliſhing whatever is expected from it!

When I look upon an anatomized animal, how forcibly do I feel the certainty of a God! How wonderful!—What art!—What beauty!—What inimitable perfection!—How wonderfully diſtinct, how wonderfully combined!

Sirely I will ſeek my God—Nor ſhall man prevent me from the free uſe of my reaſon :—God knows it is not preſumptuouſly I ſay ſo, but hereby am I perſuaded that I beſt prove my title to the name of man.

Is God the object of our animal ſenſes?—Not immediately. Is he diſcoverable by our reaſon?—In a ſmall degree he is. Is the idea of God innate?—It does not ſeem to be ſo. God then has created beings who may be ignorant of him?—Yes. How do you know that there is a God?—Becauſe every thing that is the object of my ſenſes is an effect. Reaſon informs me no effect can take place without a cauſe; the firſt cauſe I call God, who is neceſſary ſelf-exiſtent, and I believe that God is a perfect being.

It may be aſked whether a perfect being would form ſo imperfect a creature as man?——The queſtion is founded in error, man's nature is perfect, that is, as of a man, although it be imperfect as of a God.

The imperfections and unhappineſs which we find among mankind are not to be aſcribed to God, but to the miſuſe of the powers he has given us; for he has provided all his creatures with the means of rendering their ſituations pleaſing.

God is all-wiſe, and hence are his decrees immutable; this is every day proved to us, by thoſe occurrences which are unnoticed, ſolely from our being uſed to them.

The ſun ſhines alike upon the virtuous and wicked;—the rain refreſhes all lands;—the ſeaſons return;—the years revolve;—the good and the bad pay equally the

debt of nature.—Creatures are born and die; and the world knows no change of the regular ordination, which we found when we entered upon it; our old men ſpeak of none but natural effects; God is the ſame from everlaſting, and his goodneſs is ſeen in all his works.

Did men exert their reaſon, how differently would many things appear to them to what they now do!—But in this are they to be pitied, for parents breed up their children in the prejudices of the nation in which they are born! The eſtabliſhed religion of moſt countries forbids them to doubt of its truth, or to freely examine its principles; and declares that faith in the revelations of God is abſolutely neceſſary for ſalvation, which faith is only proved by an unlimited confidence.

Yet do I find many different nations declaring, that they have received the particular revelations of God; when upon comparing them, I diſcover that theſe revelations are contradictory, even in material parts. Can I believe the one God can act ſo much beneath himſelf? Can God be equally changeable as man?

Doth God command one people to kneel to the croſs, and direct another to trample on it? Doth he tell one nation that his Paradiſe is furniſhed for the moſt exquiſite ſenſual delights? while to another he declares that ſenſuallity is diſpleaſing to him?

All theſe cannot be the revelations of God; and without making uſe of my reaſon, how can I diſcriminate the right?—Can my being born at Mecca, make God a different Being from the God of the Chriſtians?—God cannot change, he is always the ſame; alike good, beneficent, and attentive to the prayers of the humble and meek.

I agree, that whatſoever God declares to me, muſt be true, and no doubt can remain with me, but that I ought to perform whatever commands he lays upon me. But then let me ſay, when what is called the will of God is declared to me by man, that although I do acknowledge myſelf bound to do his will, yet have I full liberty to enquire, and indeed it is my duty to examine, whether that which others declare to me as the will of God, is ſo or not. Indeed all thoſe who believe in the authority of the bible, muſt acknowledge the force of this argument by their own ſtory of the prophet who was deſtroyed by the lion.

Shall a man have unlimited confidence becauſe he daringly preſumes to ſay, I have ſeen God, who has ordered me to command you to believe the things which I now tell you? Belief, God knows is uncontroulable.—I cannot doubt, and therefore I believe. It is not becauſe I wiſh to believe that therefore I do, but truely becauſe I cannot believe otherwiſe.

No man, really coming from God, would ſay, you *muſt* believe what I tell you. All he could ſay would be this——What I relate to you, I aſſure you I had from God, who commanded me to declare it unto you, that you *may* know his will and fulfill it.

Hence I claim a right to examine what is denominated revelation, and I look upon myſelf particularly called upon, to acquaint myſelf with the truth of the religion in which I was brought up, and to examine with humble freedom, the truth of the grand principle that Chriſt indeed was the very God.

God has evidently left the mind of man free, and although he made it capable of reaſoning, and of exerting its powers to the true ſublime, by unprejudicedly reflecting on the objects that ſurround it; yet it was not his deſign to force mankind to exceed their natures, or even to compel them to uſe the faculties which he hath given them.

I do ſuppoſe that God implanted in the firſt man juſt ideas of his greatneſs and power, and having bleſſed him with all neceſſary knowledge, paſſed an unalterable decree, that man ſhould be a free agent.

We know in theſe later days, how eaſily corruption pervades mental tradition; and, from our own experience of the effects to be expected from uncultivated reaſon,

we need not greatly wonder at mankind loſing all juſt ideas of God.—Their animal nature overwhelmed their ſpiritual: In a few ages they looked for their God among his works, and worſhipped the Creator under the form of the creature; till afterwards a worſe corruption followed—for they worſhipped the creature as God.

Still the nature of man remained the ſame; the fiat of God had gone forth, and was immutable:—His goodneſs bore with his creatures infirmities, and ſparing the vengeance he might have juſtly inflicted, he left them to experience the calamities which their own follies would bring upon them.

One people, according to their own accounts, retained a knowledge of the true God; but their religion was filled with ceremonials, and their hearts would hardly own the great I AM; they worſhipped him as the God of juſtice; yet ſanctioned their own cruelties under the pretended mandates of the Father of Mercies.

Prophets were conſulted by Jews, and oracles by Idolators; to both was ſometimes permitted the foreknowledge of future events.——A ſupreme preſerver of the world was believed by all nations; and the true God might at all times have been known by that mind which was capable of getting the better of the prejudices of edu-

cation ;—but to produce an unprejudiced mind appears almoſt a miracle.

In Jeſus Chriſt, we are juſtified in ſaying, that this was diſcoverable ; he had a juſt idea of the majeſty of the King of Heaven ; he ſaw through the impiety of offering up ſacrifices for ſin, while the heart remained uncleanſed.—The faſts and new moons of the Jews his ſoul abhorred ; he ſaw through their wickedneſs ; he lamented the depraved ſtate of mankind ; he burned to declare the true God, and to make his name revered throughout all nations.

Wiſhing to make known the great Creator, in order that his people might be induced to correct the errors which debaſed them, the bleſſed Jeſus commenced his ſcheme by acquainting himſelf with the opinions of the Hebrew Doctors ; and at twelve years old we find him conſulting with them in the temple.

The Evangeliſts have not given us that minute account of the early years of Chriſt which might have been expected ; But had he been the Creator himſelf, as the Chriſtians maintain, no one moment could have paſſed without being of conſequence to mankind ; nor would he have ſuffered one action to eſcape him without its being faithfully recorded.

Would the omniſcient God, who thus is ſuppoſed to have made an alteration in the ſyſtem which he had planned; who, it is ſaid, took upon himſelf our fleſh; ſuffered himſelf to be nailed to the croſs; died for our redemption; that is, to redeem us from his own anger—Would this kind, this beneficent Being, who thus intereſted himſelf in the welfare of man, have gone from the earth without preventing mankind from having a doubt of his divinity? Would he not have left with all future ages a certainty which they could not have diſputed? This would have been a miracle worthy of our God! By ſuch an act, his intention of coming upon earth would have been anſwered! He would truly have made himſelf known to all nations, and we might each of us have ſaid to our children, this is the Lord's own act! Doubt it if you can!

But what is the fact? — Jeſus choſe ſimple low born men to be his companions, becauſe his own ſituation in life was low, his father Joſeph being a carpenter; they were witneſſes of his purity and of his virtues; they ſaw him all beneficent; they loved him; he taught them his doctrines; they were convinced of his truth, and they believed in him.

When he began his miniſtry, he preached to the people of the goodneſs of God; of his love for his works, of his wiſhes for them properly to exert the powers which he had given them; of the neceſſity of avoiding

ſin, and the benefit to be hoped from ſincere repentance.——He taught them, that the God of mercies had planned every thing for the happineſs of his creatures; that all that God had required from them was, to act in ſuch a manner as would promote the welfare of each other, and to be thankful to their God for his merciful kindneſs. He told them that God would not ſuffer wilful miſconduct, which tended to oppreſs the meaneſt of his creatures, to go unpuniſhed; nor had he intended that the unhappineſs which the free agency of man might produce, ſhould be without alleviation; but as this world could not be the ſeat of rewards and puniſhments, without counteracting his pre-determined unalterable plans, he gave them to believe in a future immortal ſtate.—This I believe to be the religion of Jeſus.

Warmed with the conſcious juſtneſs of his thoughts; ſenſible of the conſequence they were of to mankind; he determined to boldly declare them before the face of all people.—Low in ſtation, of no weight in the councils of the city, but filled with the love of God, Jeſus firmly commenced his teaching.

Truth wants not the aſſiſtance of art.—Jeſus declares to the people the true God; he tells them, in the ſimpleſt manner, their vices and their duties;—he explains how unwelcome to the purity of God, were their faſti-

duous religious ceremonials; and proving by his humility, his virtue, his univerſal benevolence, and his ſteady refuſal of temporary honours, that no other motive but contributing to the glory of God and the happineſs of mankind had urged him to action; he ſeeks for every opportunity of encreaſing the number of the virtuous.

The love of God, proved by love to mankind, was what he required from his hearers. He taught with confidence; he cenſured with mildneſs and compaſſion; but his ſoul was oftentimes afflicted, and he wept for the obduracy of his fellow creatures.

Thus preaching in truth, and ſetting an example of virtuous living, did the bleſſed Jeſus paſs his life.—The Jewiſh people began to ſee the darkneſs which had overſhadowed them; they looked to the light with admiration; they wondered at their teacher; they thought him worthy, they wiſhed him to be their king; they truſted, he was the perſon whom they expected about this time, who, as foretold by their prophets, would enable them to throw off the Roman yoke.

But Jeſus refuſed their honours; his object was different; he wanted to call mankind to a knowledge of the true God, and in accompliſhing this lay all his ambition.

Numbers now fought him; they followed him, they adored him; they called him good;—but Jefus is faid to have anfwered, "why calleft thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." All his difcourfes breathe that exalted piety and refpect to the moft high, which none but a Being of his virtue could attain;—He was furely the beloved of God!

Fully acquainted with the writings of the ancient prophets, he feemed to believe a Meffias would appear who fhould inftruct Ifrael in the knowledge of the true God. He found himfelf ftrongly impelled to take upon himfelf the miniftry; but when John fent for to afk, "Art thou he that fhould come, or do we look for another?" His humility would not fuffer him to affume that high office—if he was the perfon foretold by the prophets, he knew that the Lord was true: but whether the prophecy was fulfilled in him, he did not prefume to fay, but anfwered, "Go and fhew John thofe things which ye do hear and fee;" that is, I do not fay I am the Meffias, but my works muft prove whether I am or not.

When, in the 16th chapter of Saint Matthew, Jefus enquires of his difciples whom they fuppofe that he is? Simon Peter anfwers, Thou art the Chrift, the fon of the living God;—Jefus anfwers, "Bleffed art thou, for flefh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.

If he was the Chriſt, he knew that Peter muſt be a worthy diſciple, becauſe the Almighty had firſt communicated it to him; and knowing the worth of Peter, he doubts not his truth; thus being perſuaded that he might be the perſon ſpoken of by the prophets, he ſhews to his diſciples the ſufferings which he muſt experience, and declares more openly to them the meaning of the ſcriptures; but knowing that his actions would alone prove the truth of his miſſion, he forbids them that they tell any man he was the Chriſt.—He encourages them in virtue, and he comforts them with the hopes of a happy reſt through the mercies of God:—This ſeems to be the true ſtatement, as collected from the Teſtament.

The chiefs of the Jewiſh ſynagogue perceiving, from the number of thoſe who followed him every day encreaſing, that their intereſts were leſſening, ſtudied to entangle him by queſtions of the greateſt ſubtility; but Jeſus returned their queſtions upon them, and refuſed to tell them the authority by which he preached. He declared how much the Almighty Father was diſpleaſed at the pretended religion of the Scribes and Phariſees, and aſſured them that the unexpreſſed real ſorrow of the heart, was more efficacious in waſhing away ſin, than all the oblations and ſacrifices of the Jewiſh ritual.

Unable to convict him of error, they ſaw no way of preſerving their conſequence, but by deſtroying Jeſus, and they council'd to put him to death.

This world was not desired by Jesus; he looked with confidence to a future state; he knew their conspiracies, but he knew, that without the permission of God, they could not hurt him; he believed himself sent on earth to call mankind to a knowledge of their God,—he was persuaded that he acted under a divine impulse, and was all submission to the divine will.

He avoided not the betrayer;—he was bound and lead to judgment;—Pilate asked him—Art thou the king of the Jews?—Jesus answered, thou sayst.

I cannot say I could ever understand this reply,—for it conveys no clear idea to me; and however proper it might be in the man Jesus not to answer any ensnaring question, I am convinced no such reason could actuate the God of nature.)

The evening he was betrayed, his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and he prayed 'O my Father! if it be possible: let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt,' and a second time he prayed, 'O my Father! if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done;' and he went a third time and prayed, saying the same words.

What a mockery is here if Jesus was the God of creation! he prays to himself, yet will not grant his own

prayer; three times does he beſeech himſelf to avoid death, yet cannot do it—'tis abſurd!

But how changed is the ſcene, when we behold this a conflict between the body and ſoul of a virtuous man; how beautiful! how ſublime!

Knowing that his end approached, yet lamenting the ignorance in which his fellow creatures were ſtill involved, the bleſſed Jeſus hoped, if the Almighty would delay the period of his death, that he might be able to encreaſe the true believers, and that the other nations of the earth might be taught the knowledge of the true God: But as it was not given him to judge contrary to the will of his Heavenly Father, and confiding, that his ordinances would be for the beſt, he expreſſes his reſignation and willingneſs to ſuffer death, if ſo it ſeemed fit to his God.

This is the greateſt trial of the faith of man; Jeſus proved his truth, by ſubmiting to the death of the croſs.

No reply did he make to the ſcoffs of the ignorant multitude; he was nailed to the croſs, in full confidence of having done his duty; yet it ſhould ſeem he had hoped that, before his death, God would have given an indubitable proof of his innocence. For finding himſelf periſhing without any appearance of ſuch interpoſition, he feared that God had forſaken him; and he exclaim-

ed, " My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me ?" but the Almighty ſuffered him to pay the debt of nature, in order as it ſeems, to make Chriſt's nature quite clear, and to prevent, as far as his immutable laws would permit, the diſciples and poſterity from having the erroneous opinion, of Chriſt himſelf being the divine firſt cauſe, which might have been the caſe had he permitted him to aſcend immediately from the croſs into heaven.

Yet to convince mankind of the truth of Chriſt, he, according to the Chriſtian tradition, rent the vail of the temple in twain, from top to bottom; he commanded the ſun to be darkened, the graves to be opened, and the bodies of the ſaints to appear unto many: Thus ended the life of Chriſt. He was buried; but his body did not remain in the ſepulchre; the Evangeliſts declare he aroſe again the third day, and aſcended into heaven—the Jews ſay the body was ſtolen.—— Of early reported tranſactions, God alone can tell what is the truth.

It is ſufficient for us, that Jeſus lived, taught the knowledge of the true God in purity and truth, ſet us an indubitable example of virtue, and died to prove his faith. It becomes us, in all things, to conduct ourſelves in ſuch a manner as will be agreeable to God; this Jeſus commanded; to this our reaſon aſſents, and the commandments of the Almighty ought to be engraven in our hearts.

If ye aſk what are the commandments of God? take this anſwer:

There is but one God—Ye ſhall have no other Gods but him—His name ſhall be ever reſpected, and ye ſhall worſhip no other—The relative duties ye ſhall not neglect; your own happineſs is involved in that of others; for no wilful injury ſhall be unnoticed, or in its event deſirable.

May we all think worthily of God! Of that majeſtic ſupreme who has bleſſed us with reaſon, whereby we may know him! May our hearts be warmed with the love of him, who has permitted us to perceive his univerſal love for his creatures.—He is the ſame for ever and ever.—Bleſſed be the Lord God of Heaven! May his name be known through all the earth! And may the lives of all his people be evermore conducted according to his will!

And, at the name of Jeſus, let us look up to heaven with raptures, and let affection and reſpect be felt in every breaſt; for it was he who firſt broke through the darkneſs of idolatry, and preached the Lord God Omnipotent in purity and truth!

His victory let us glory in; for he conquered the fears of Death and the terrors of the grave!—His life

was an example of the higheſt virtue ;—his death was a proof of his belief in God.——He cleanſed the temple from impurities ; he made manifeſt the God of nature ; he lived free from ſin, and died in righteouſneſs ; and we may now juſtly exclaim, O Death, where is thy ſting ? O Grave, where is thy victory ? Bleſſed be the Lord God Omnipotent, who has given us the victory !

## DISCOURSE the FOURTH.

BRETHREN, we will, this morning, turn our thoughts to conſider thoſe motives of our governor Jacobus, which induced him to leave his country, and the religion of his fathers, and at length to form the laws of this country, upon the foundation of what he was convinced, was truly the will of God.

JACOBUS VERITAS was born in England, and was brought up in what is called the Church of England, to diſtinguiſh it from other Proteſtant congregations, which are ſo called from their proteſting againſt the doctrines of the Church of Rome. — The people of England, in emancipating themſelves from the Romiſh Church, ſtill retain ſeveral of its prejudices; but the toleration allowed in that country is favourable to the free enquirer.

Jacobus, in the early part of his life, was exceedingly fond of philoſophical reſearches, and from thence was convinced of the certainty of One great firſt cauſe.— Taught from his infancy to have a high veneration for the Deity; he wiſhed, when his mental faculties encreaſed, to gain a clear and diſtinct knowledge of him: — but the writers whom he conſulted, in general connected what was ſatisfactory to reaſon with what was ſo totally

contrary to it, that he felt within his breaſt an uneaſineſs of which he could not get the better. Either his ideas of God were very erroneous, and he muſt be obnoxious to God's anger; or elſe if his thoughts were true, the greater part of the world was in an error.—He ſought the opinions of all nations, and not one of them was ſatisfactory unto him: he brought them all together, and found ſo much difference between them, that he thought himſelf juſtified in rejecting them all; and from his own reaſon, to form a ſyſtem of religion according to what he thought was right.

He perceived that religion ſeemed to depend abſolutely on the place of birth:——That in one part of Europe men knelt to the croſs, while in another they trampled upon it; that in ſome parts, they eſteemed it a damnable offence to doubt whether God did come upon earth to die for man, that in others, the confeſſion of this faith was thought an abſurdity.

Convinced that there is but one God, and therefore, that two or more diſtinct ideas of him, could not proceed from his own revelation; he determined to ſearch, whether, in any of the prevailing religions of the world, there were the evident marks of a revelation from God.

Three he found moſt general,—Jewiſh, Mahometan, and Chriſtian.

The firſt, the clergy of England treated as a wilful continuance in error; the ſecond as an impious impoſture; but Jacobus perceived that the people who confeſſed thoſe two religions were more numerous than the chriſtians; and when the Heathen and other nations were joined with them, that the proportion of the Chriſtians was very ſmall; and therefore, aſſenting to the truth of a doctrine of his church, that every ſoul was of equal conſequence in the eyes of God; he could not readily believe that God would permit ſuch a number, ignorantly to incur the ſentence of damnation.

He learnt, that the Mahometan nations believed that God had publiſhed his will in the Koran: This book Jacobus procured, but was ſoon convinced of the impoſtor, and eaſily diſcovered the ambitious policy of Mahomet; while the great Alla was repreſented more like a king of the earth than of heaven. Mahomet's deſcription of the celeſtial regions being entirely compoſed of the valuables of the earth, and diamonds and other jewels ſparkling with glorious luſtre.

His paradiſe is filled with ſcenes of gay delight; and beautiful women, with luſcious wines are held out as rewards for thoſe who die in Mahometaniſm; this ſurely could not be the revelation of God!

Chriſtianity, founded on judaiſm, called his attention, and he found its profeſſors declaring, that the bible was

written by the immediate inſpiration of God, and therefore, that in this and the teſtament, was to be diſcovered every article of faith.

The bible begins with ſuch an account of the formation of the world as ſoon ſatisfied him God was not the author of it; and from the contradictions and abſurdities which are in many parts of it, he ſaw, too viſibly, another work of man attempted to be forced on mankind, as the word of the ſupreme.

He renounced the opinion, that God had given the bible and teſtament for the ſole guides of mankind; and he looked into his own breaſt, for new principles to go upon: He took as Data.

That there is one ſelf exiſtent Being, or God, who created all things: And that this Being is of infinite perfection and goodneſs.

Man, then he acknowledged a creature, made by God; he knew that an all-wiſe and all-powerful Being would create every thing proper for the completion of his purpoſe;——But what his purpoſe was, could not be known by the creature, unleſs God gave him faculties to perceive it.

Filled with the moſt exalted ideas of God, and finding the powers of reaſon to have been a gift from him, he ventured to aſſert, that nothing which was incompatible with the ideas which his reaſon gave him of the goodneſs and greatneſs of his God, could proceed, by Revelation, from the ſupreme.

The creation is ſurely a proof of the greatneſs, wiſdom, and power of the moſt high; but the account which is given in the Bible, of the fall of man, is unworthy of the God of mercy.

To ſuppoſe, that man was framed, in his firſt earthly ſtate, immortal, is a thought which no reaſonable mind can allow; for it would be admitting, as a fact, that which every hour contradicts. And if, according to the chriſtian teachers, the omniſcient God foreſaw man would eat of the forbidden fruit, and that he himſelf muſt die to redeem the world; he muſt alſo have known, that even his dying would not prevent mankind from continuing in ſin; and that there was one ſimple and efficacious way of preventing the wickedneſs of man, viz. deſtroying the tree that produced this fruit, but this he would not do.——God thus is made to conſent to the damnation and eternal puniſhment of creatures, who could not avoid offending him: For the fore-knowledge of God, can only proceed from his power of ordering future events.

In the teſtament, Jacobus found fine moral ideas, and a more worthy account of God, than in any other of the Jewiſh or Heathen writings.—Chriſt, he perceived, muſt have declared the true God in purity; but that his ſimple intelligible doctrines, adapted to the underſtanding and benefit of all men were ſo obſcured, by thoſe who delivered them to poſterity, that at length, the religion which Chriſt preached, in a ſimple and clear manner, viz. 'Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with 'all thy heart, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve'; and 'thy neighbour thou ſhalt love as thyſelf' was filled, with unintelligible and extraordinary opinions.

Jacobus ſet about clearing all the ſuperſtitious ſuperſtructures which he found added to the religion of Jeſus; and he has left us the pure doctrines of that virtuous perſon.

He ſaw that the errors of mankind aroſe, from not exerting their own faculties, but truſting, with implicitneſs to others;—this he uſed to ſhew, was alluded to by the condemnation of the ſervant who hid his talent in a napkin, as we read in the teſtament; and he ſtrictly enjoined us all: 'To doubt whoever ſhall tell you, 'that ye muſt not truſt to, and uſe, the talent of reaſon 'which God has given you.—Ye cannot, with the 'utmoſt efforts of your power, diſcover any thing which

'God does not will you to perceive; and the more that 'ye freely enquire into his essence, the more will ye be 'convinced of his truth.'

Doubt that there is God if ye can! may be said to every one who will unprejudicedly, or indeed, even prejudicedly employ his talents in the examination of nature.

From the situation of man, it will appear, that there must be three duties which he has to perform; his duty to God; his duty to his neighbour; and his duty to himself;——these three are so intimately connected, that one cannot be omitted without the others being broken through.

Our duty to God, is described by all nations, to consist, in believing him,—fearing him,—loving him,—puting our whole trust in him, and calling upon him.

But to accomplish this, it will be necessary to exercise our reason, in order to enable us to have proper ideas of our God.

There have been men who have said with their mouths they did not believe there was a God: A simple, but

forcible argument may be held with ſuch men.—If there be no Creator, man is either ſelf-formed, or the production of chance; (tho' none of them can explain what they mean;) to one or other they will agree:—Let then man's body be chained to the ground, his hands and feet faſtened, and let this Being be laid in a dungeon, without food;—when either himſelf, or chance ſhall releaſe him, acknowledge that you will be convinced by the experiment; which none of them, I believe, would venture to make, becauſe they would ſee that there was no chance in the caſe.

There is a God, our Creator! although not perceptable by our ſenſes, which are only adapted to the clear comprehenſion of thoſe things that are neceſſary to us in our preſent ſtate of exiſtence.

To believe in him, is in ſome degree, an act of neceſſity in a thinking mind; for the more we exert the powers which he has given us, the more are we ſatisfied that there is a God. When we examine the art, the contrivance that is diſcoverable in the minuteſt thing upon earth; when following the idea, we trace the firſt appearance, the ſtate of perfection; and afterwards the declining ſtate of every thing living, till at length it returns to earth: when we go beyond this world, and admire the ſun, the luminous centre of our planetary ſyſtem, and afterwards permit our minds to range to that part of ſpace, where are the fixed ſtars, which

we readily believe to be other worlds: what poſſibility have we to avoid a belief in God?

To fear him,—to love him, muſt be the effects of a proper belief in him; and theſe are ſo ſtrongly impreſſed upon the mind which knoweth God, that there is not one inſtance to the contrary.

God does not ſeem to have given us any innate ideas; not even of himſelf. When he created the world, and called man into exiſtence, he might perhaps have given by inſpiration, that which after ages were to poſſeſs only by application.

To enquire how long the world has been, is a ſpeculation of little uſe; but the examination of the ſtate in which it is at the period of our exiſting in it, is a neceſſary and proper enquiry; and by applying to our reaſon, we ſhall be enabled to know what is right for us to do.

Truſt to no man's opinion in thoſe things wherein yourſelves are concerned: But by reading and diſcourſe endeavour to convince your own reaſon, and act in ſtrict conformity to that which yourſelves are perſuaded is right.

God has evidently made men free agents, and has not abſolutely hindered them from being guilty of actions that diſgrace their nature; but upon examining into ſuch as are thus guilty, we ſhall find them either quite ignorant of God, or elſe poſſeſſing very erroneous ideas of him.

God is omniſcient and omnipotent! Was man fully perſuaded of this, would he wilfully offend a Being, who could puniſh him, when at the ſame time, he knew that he could not conceal his tranſgreſſion from him?

It is from ignorance of God, that ſo many vices and ſins are committed; for many men talk much about God, who, by their actions, prove they have not known him.

Whatever injury is committed againſt man, is an offence that cannot be agreeable to God; and from hence, has been derived, one of the proofs of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments; becauſe many virtuous men ſuffer, while wicked men ſeem to proſper in the world; and therefore it is hoped that God will render that juſtice in a future ſtate, which he omits in the preſent.

Theſe things appear dark to us, nor will they be cleared up, till our ſouls are freed from their earthly

habitation; then ſhall our faculties be enabled to diſcover what God has appointed; and we may hope, that our knowledge will be perfected.

To put our truſt in God, and to call upon him, are neceſſary effects of a juſt knowledge of him; for conſcious of his own weakneſs, and convinced of the power of his God, what man can refrain from truſting in him and calling upon him?

The duty of calling upon God is ſo much of the nature of a high favour and permiſſion, that a man ought to be fearful of becoming unworthy of it, and loſing it.

Prayer to God is a duty which his creatures are bound to fulfil for their own intereſt; but the prayers to which God attends are not mere forms of words, but the ſincere petitions which proceed from the heart. — The man who prays ſincerely, is he who ſtudies to acquaint himſelf with his God, and whoſe actions are the reſult of his deſire to fulfil the end for which he was called into being. — 'Tis not the impenitent hypocrite who comes into church, ſays his prayers, and goes from thence to the immediate commiſſion of vice, that will receive the bleſſings which he aſks; but he, who conſcious of his own weakneſs, humbly beſeeches remiſſion of his God for his paſt offences, prays for ſtrength to avoid tranſgreſſing for the future, and ſtudiouſly avoids being

guilty of any ſin.——It is not he who calls Lord! Lord! that ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he alone who doeth the will of God.

Chriſt has left us a form of prayer the moſt ſimple and comprehenſive imaginable, and has declared the folly of long hypocritical prayers, by the parable of the Phariſee and Publican.

Prayer to God ſhould be from the heart; and humbly performed, will ever be efficacious in preventing ſin; becauſe it is an impoſſibility for the man, who with a right faith addreſſes the Almighty, to engage in any predetermined action, that will render him obnoxious to his fellow creatures.—'Tis not for man to judge who are the penitent ſinners; but the hypocrite may be aſſured, that his hypocriſy cannot be concealed from God, nor defended from the puniſhment which is juſtly due to a mockery of the moſt high, performed for the purpoſe of deceiving man.

Our duty to ourſelves conſiſts in exerciſing properly the faculties which the omnipotent has given us as rational Beings.

We perceive the exalted ſtate in which we are placed upon this earth; yet we are ſenſible of the infirmities

of our nature :—but the design of God in creation appears evidently to have proceeded from his desire of communicating happiness :—Without assistance from others, life loses half its comforts, and the wants of our nature are best relieved in society. —To assist others, in order that we may have a claim upon their assistance, is a duty, that policy itself, without religion, will tell us ought not to be neglected ; but, in a religious society, where we are satisfied that all our possessions come by the permission of God, it will appear indispensably our duty to relieve the wants of our fellow creatures.

Happiness is the chief concern of our lives, and we may declare, that it is annexed to a strict performance of the will of God :—This we must endeavour to accomplish by properly using the powers which he has given us.

Our reason, which we find capable of receiving not unworthy ideas of God's attributes, is fully able to direct us to the obtaining of whatsoever is necessary for our existence ; but it requires cultivation to enable it to enjoy the full benefit of its powers. To improve our understandings, in order to obtain a proper sense of the will of God, is therefore a very high duty.

In most countries, prejudices and ignorance have so overwhelmed the powers of reason, that, even in the most material articles of the happiness of life, men

find themſelves continually in an error; but they ſeem to take no advantage from experience.

God has created the human ſpecies male and female, as he has done the chief part of animated nature, and our births are regulated by ſimilar laws. It will be ſeen, that even in this, which may be juſtly eſteemed ſo great a concern, God has not departed from his general laws; and that the birth of the firſt monarch upon earth is dependent upon ſimilar circumſtances with that of the meaneſt animal. — Nay, if man ſhould be induced to abuſe this prerogative of continuing his ſpecies, God has not, even in this, deprived him of his free agency.

The deſire that is felt by all animals towards thoſe of the contrary ſex, leads them to continue their ſpecies; and God has implanted in all his creatures, ſuch an affection for their young, as to prevent all wilful neglect.

The end being anſwered when the offſpring is capable of taking care of itſelf, connubial ties are ſoon diſſolved among the brute creation, and when a particular ſeaſon is paſt, they generally live in ſolitude and ſeparate tranquility, and new alliances are formed the next ſeaſon.

In man, animal love rages with great power, and the wiſdom of God directed that it ſhould do ſo, foreſeeing, that without it did, the race of man might become

extinct, through the unpleasant situations into which his creature might, perhaps, bring himself, through misuse of his free agency.

But reason was made able to regulate this desire, and in those countries, where we are told a general dissoluteness takes place, it will be found to arise from the absurd ideas of the people, who foolishly endeavour to counteract the laws of nature.

There are some nations who esteem as virtuous, those who live single and have no connection with the other sex; but how ignorant must they be of the Creator, who suppose he is to be pleased with his creatures refraining from that which he has intended should be a means of accomplishing his will and of contributing to their happiness.

Continence, merely for continence sake, is far from being meritorious; it is really sinful, as being the determination to prevent the existence of beings, who might hereafter prove themselves worthy servants of their God.

Those nations talk of the virtue of avoiding temptations; of the necessity of punishing the flesh; and represent, as meritorious, many things which are evidently

deſtructive of the deſigns of omnipotence.—But what is the reſult ?—juſt as might be expected ; for God's general laws are immutable, and are not to be broken without inconvenience.

As rational beings, who are advanced above the reſt of the world, it becomes us to reflect ſeriouſly upon this matter :—Marriage is a concern of no ſmall conſequence to our happineſs, and we ought thoroughly to acquaint ourſelves with its nature and deſign.

When firſt born, man is perfectly feeble and helpleſs, and without the attentions of his parents, he would inevitably periſh. Other animals become, in a ſhort time, able to procure the neceſſaries of life, and to ſatisfy all their wants, but the infancy of man is long.

The brute creation receive from nature, with their ſtrength, all the perfections which they are capable of uſing to their own advantage ; but our reaſon requires cultivation ere it attains its powers ; and without the aſſiſtance of others, we remain ignorant and weak : hence in mankind it is neceſſary, that family connections ſhould be permanent, in order that children, by receiving the inſtructions of thoſe who are naturally intereſted in their welfare, ſhould attain the qualifications which, it becomes their duty to ſeek.

From not duly conſidering theſe truths, many people complain of the ſtraitneſs of the bands of marriage, and purſue the very means of rendering poſterity unhappy; for finding few comforts ariſe from their own imprudent connections, they conclude, that unhappineſs is more to be expected than joy; and that, as marriage too often brings oppoſite tempers into an indiſſoluble union, other conveniencies are neceſſary to render it deſirable.

Yet, knowing the effect of nature in youth, and conſidering that ſimilar want of experience may produce ſimilar miſtakes, they preach to their children, how likely their inexperience is to cauſe them to fall into error, and deſire them to put implicit faith in whatever they adviſe them.—And what is their advice?—Generally as follows:

As their children may ſee from their own experience how few married couples are happy, they tell them, that they muſt obſerve how great is the danger of being unhappy in that ſtate, and how fooliſh it is to be attracted by perſonal qualifications; and ſhewing them how liable they are to be deceived if they marry while young—deſire them to take time to conſider, to look out prudently, and when they do make their choice to take care to have ſubſtance to comfort them in caſe they ſhould be miſtaken; and ſpeak of wealth as the only ſure anchor to depend on.

Thus educated, a young man dares not fay to his parents, "fuch a woman is in poſſeſſion of every qualification of beauty and virtue that is to be found or deſired in the ſex, and I wiſh to make her my wife, unleſs at the ſame time he can ſay that her fortune is likewiſe as deſirable. Without fortune the choice will be diſapproved of, and a reply will be made, "that there is no occaſion to be in a hurry."

In thoſe countries the reſult is too often as follows: A young man finding his firſt affections checked, his life becomes uncomfortable; his friends, as they eſteem themſelves, endeavour to enliven him, by leading him into ſcenes of gaiety and diſſipation;—his parents, perhaps, wink at this as being in their opinion, the leaſt error, and ſuch a one as they think age and experience will correct; and they treat with the name of youthful follies, thoſe actions which muſt render the evening of his life uncomfortable:—when too late, they all find themſelves miſtaken, and he labours under a bankrupt conſtitution, with no other recompence than reflections that convince him of his folly.

But our legiſlator wiſely followed nature in all her directions, and endeavoured to ſtrengthen the power of reaſon. He ſaw that the paſſion of love was not to be trifled with, and that the happineſs of community depended upon its being duly regulated, according to the dictates of reaſon.

He thought that encouragement ſhould be given to youth to marry prudently, and that inducements ſhould be held out for parents to do their duty. He put marriage upon the footing of nature, and declared that cohabitation alone conſtituted it in the eyes of God; but wiſhed that every man and woman who choſe to cohabit, would ſubmit to the ceremony he had appointed, in order that due reſpect might be paid to all married people.

He ordained, that parents ſhould have no other controul over their children than what reaſon gave them; and has even prevented them from paſſionately depriving them of their ſhare in their fortune——And what has been the effect?—That there is now before me the moſt happy congregation in the world. — For parents, knowing the independence of their children, exert their affection ſolely from motives of procuring the true happineſs of their children:—and our youth, perceiving that parents have no other motives for the advice they give than to produce their real happineſs, and knowing, by their own reaſon, that every action is directed to that one end, expreſs that ſubmiſſion in every reſpect which other nations have fooliſhly attempted to force by laws, which tend to counteract the operations of nature.

Prevented from abuſing their truſts, parents themſelves have the natural inclination of providing for the welfare of their children, both ſtrengthened and duly re-

gulated; and the advantage hereof is fully proved, by this nation finding the marriage ſtate, as was intended by God, the fountain of happineſs on earth.

In other countries the gift of God, whereby he permits us to become parents, is but little conſidered in the light it ought to be, and is too generally abuſed, to the deſtruction of the end intended.

Debaucheries are committed at a very early period of life, and the artificial forced ſtate which the vices of thoſe nations permit their youth to experience, ſoon debilitates and weakens their faculties.—Parents tenderly overlook many irregularities, till familiarized to vice by general depravity, they, with impotent concern, ſee their children follow a courſe which their own folly has occaſioned; yet comfort themſelves with the hope, that the error will be wiped away when the heat of youth is over.—Vain expectation! As numbers have experienced to their ſorrow.

Our friend Jacobus, acquainted with the errors of other countries, endeavoured to provide againſt them, and knowing that human nature was every where the ſame, eſtabliſhed ſuch laws and regulations as he thought would produce happineſs to his people.

Ignorance he believed to be the ſole cauſe of mankind's committing ſin; and every thing that human fore-

light could provide, to bring man from ignorance to the knowledge of his own nature, has been prepared by him.

By his regulations, was the chief concern of life, marriage, put upon that natural rational footing, of which we now reap the benefit; and our children are taught to look upon it, as it undoubtedly is, a matter of the greateſt importance.

Free to chuſe our companions; taught to ſelect them for their real worth; the numerous happy families which ſurround us, beſpeak the virtues of their anceſtors One principle actuates the whole; and joy and pleaſure are conſpicuous in every countenance.——The time that is not engaged in the neceſſary buſineſs of life, is employed, by all, to the improvement of others.——Each perſon, in every family, is ſtudious to gain and to diſpenſe knowledge; and happineſs is ardently ſought for and promoted.——The manly virtues are diſcoverable in all our boys; temperance and fortitude is conſpicuous in every countenance; while that bluſhing delicacy of the female ſex, which was formed as a lovely contraſt to the neceſſary hardineſs of man, is here diſcovered in its fulleſt perfection.——To my young friends, I ſhall now particularly addreſs myſelf.

Ye are, my beloved, attending here, through the love of God, to endeavour to render him acceptable ſervice, to

worſhip him; to thank him for the bleſſings ye have received; and, by the inſtructions here given you, to learn to know your duty, in order that ye may truly perform his will.

The knowledge of the true God is here taught you; your mental faculties are ſtrengthened; your reaſons are improved; and ye receive from your parents, every aſſiſtance which human nature requires.—Ye muſt be ſenſible the obligations which ye owe to your parents, can never be repaid by you; and how inadequate all your returns muſt be, for the pains they have taken, in giving you your education: Exert therefore your endeavours, to render their lives happy and agreeable.

Obedience to their commands is at all times due, unleſs (which can hardly be) they are contrary to the commands of God.

The obedience I inculcate, is not an entire giving up of your reaſon and opinion to theirs: In all caſes, exert your own, but examine with coolneſs, whether you are not wrong; for though your parents, as mortals, are liable to error, yet their experience enables them to judge properly of many things with which you are totally unacquainted.

If any different opinion ariſes in your minds, expreſs it with openneſs; beg of your parents to give their reaſons,

why they differ from you, and intreat them to explain them to you; if not convinced, and ſhould your parents enforce their opinions by commands, examine within your own breaſts, what are likely to be the conſequences; if they appear fatal to your future happineſs, with humility decline to act, and wait till future events ſhall render every thing more clear. ——There can little harm happen from avoiding action; and as ye increaſe in years, ye will perceive that the ideas of youth are often found by age, to be erroneous.——But when mere poſitive commands of immediate ſervice, are the points which ye are tempted to conteſt, be ye aſſured, that it is a duty incumbent upon you, to ſhew your obedience, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word; nor ought the ſacrifice of life itſelf to be objected to, if it ſhould happen that by this only, your parents happineſs could be preſerved.

To parents who have done their duty, it is impoſſible to make an adequate return, and where this duty has been unfortunately neglected, it does not abſolve children from the performance of theirs.— In all the reciprocal duties, the neglect of one party does not juſtify the failure of the other; for the obligation is in fact, to the Supreme. — And indeed there is more merit in the party who fulfills his duty, where the other fails, than where it is only an equal return.

Ye who are about to enter into life, have been taught by your parents how great a concern are the marriage engagements, and how neceſſary it is to chuſe virtuous companions,—Take the advice of a ſincere friend.

As ſoon as ye perceive within your breaſts a partiality for another, conſider whether your ſituation in life is ſuch as will permit you with honor to enter into the marriage ſtate.—Having ſatisfied yourſelves that ye will be juſtified in uniting yourſelves in marriage with the perſon whom ye love:—Search into their conduct towards their parents and their fellow creatures, and acquaint yourſelves with their virtues; if the examination proves favorable, apply to your parents for their advice, who may point out to your notice, many things of real conſequence, which your inexperience has prevented you from noticing.

Marriage is not a tranſient act, where an error may be committed and hereafter retrieved, No!—One miſtake is never to be recovered, and the reſt of your lives may be a perpetual ſtruggle between duty and ſorrow.

Let not precipitation be ſhewn in your conduct, but encourage, within your own breaſt, that high ſenſe of true honor, which will lead you to prove yourſelves entitled to the reſpect and friendſhip of all who know you; ſo ſhall the bleſſings of God be upon you, and happineſs ſhall be your reward.

And ye, my younger friends, let me intreat you to apply with aſſiduity, to the inſtructions of your parents; ſeek to acquaint yourſelves with your own nature, and learn to know your God:—Thus employed, ye will diſcover the obligations which ye owe to your parents, thro' God, for every bleſſing ye enjoy; and ye will, I am perſuaded, purſue thoſe means of affording them comfort, which your reaſon ſhall point out to you, as moſt likely to ſucceed.

Let not paſſion, of any kind, remain within your breaſts any longer than it is impoſſible for you to avoid; try to command your tempers, and be careful at all times to regulate your behaviour; with ſubmiſſion and reſpect to your ſuperiors; with freedom and friendſhip to your equals; with meekneſs, complacency, and generoſity to your inferiors.—We are all of the ſame claſs of beings, but the Almighty has been pleaſed to permit an inequality of rank, which does not exalt the individual more than it exalts human nature. Hence are our employments divided;—the good of the community is attended to and increaſed;—and each fills, with advantage to the whole, that particular occupation which his birth has allotted him.

Upon due government of your tempers, and proper attention in cultivating the faculties you poſſeſs, depends

every hope that delights human nature.—While ignorance and bad diſpoſitions produce unhappineſs in every rank.

In the reciprocal return of kind offices, which a due performance of the duties of ſociety produces in all parties, will be found that happineſs, which extends its effects even beyond the grave.—For confident in the mercies of God, conſcious of having, to the utmoſt of our abilities, fulfilled the duties of our nature, —our death bed will afford us ſuch a proſpect of happineſs as will diminiſh all its terrors.

Thus, no time of life will be unprovided for Death; nor ſhall we be uneaſy at the certainty of it.——But continual reſignation to the will of Omnipotence, whether in life or death, will mark us as Beings who love their Creator.——All our actions will be under the regulation of reaſon: our mental faculties will be duly cultivated and improved; and when the time ſhall arrive, that our bodies ſhall go to the grave, our ſouls will, with firmneſs declare, that there is but one Lord God omnipotent, the Creator of the World! Bleſſed be his name, for ever and ever! Amen.

HAVING thus given a view of the chief of their religious principles, from their own writings, I ſhall now ſubjoin thoſe general laws, with the remarks, &c. which are copied in all their churches: There are certain tables, around the walls, upon which all public acts are recorded, as well the particular regulations with reſpect to the ſingle pariſh, theſe are altered according as circumſtances may require; but the following are permanent, and not liable to any alteration: Theſe laſt are engraved in ſtone, whereas the others are only painted.

## L A W S.

Thou ſhalt have none other Gods but one.

*Remarks.* Convinced as we are, that there is a God, and that he is a ſole ſelf-exiſtent Being; we cannot ſuffer any foriegner to become entitled to the previleges of our Citizens, but ſuch as prove, by their actions, their firm belief in God, which, only can make them good members of ſociety.——And in caſe any Foreigner wiſhes to be admitted into our ſociety, he muſt paſs two years of probation, and then, upon the hundred court giving teſtimonials of his virtue to parliament, he ſhall be entitled to a naturalization act. But let him reflect, that the morals of our ſociety are

ſtrictly guarded, and we cannot ſuffer any one to corrupt them; we believe that the ſoul will be entitled to future happineſs, either from having purſued a courſe of virtue, or, perhaps, by repentance of former ſins, with a due reſtitution made for them. Let not the Foreigner attempt, from improper or hypocritical motives, to join in our community; he cannot deceive God, he will hardly deceive us: If he offends wilfully againſt any of our laws; the courts are authorized to inflict double puniſhments, and afterwards to expell him from the ſociety.

If any of our ſubjects deny the truth of this law, not being ſtrictly an idiot, let him be taken before the pariſh court, who muſt examine carefully into the charge; and upon ſufficient proof, let the court ſend him to ſolitary confinement, where he may be fed ſparingly, for one month; let him be ſupplied with books, containing the opinions of different nations upon this ſubject; let him be deſired to read them, and to ſatisfy his mind whether there is a God or not; let the pariſh miniſter frequently attend him, and lead him to a proper obſervation of the wonderful harmony diſplayed through all creation.—If after the month is expired, he ſhould ſtill continue in ignorance, let him be ſent back for anotner month, and be left entirely by himſelf, but furniſhed with every book which he may wiſh to examine; ſhould he ſtill be in doubt, whether there is a God, let

him be brought before the hundred court, which if convinced that he is neither an idiot nor a lunatic, ſhall baniſh him out of the kingdom for ever.

The reaſon is; becauſe any man who denies that there is a God, muſt be either unfortunately ignorant, or elſe very wicked—If the firſt, his ignorance ſhould be done away; if the latter, he is not fit for ou ſociety; but as the experience which he may gain by being obliged to ſee the works of God in other countries may either amend or convince him, we are bound to give him every chance.

## L A W.

Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

When the Lord's name is uſed, it ſhould be with the higheſt veneration and reſpect, and every perſon muſt perceive how great an offence it is to join a falſity with it.

If any man is proved before the hundred court to have ſworn falſely, or borne falſe witneſs, let him be committed to ſolitary confinement for three months, for the firſt offence; for two years, for the ſecond offence; and for the reſt of his life, for the third conviction.

*Remarks.*—Theſe offences proceed from ignorance, and it is a duty in the ſtate to endeavour to call its ſub-

jects to the uſe of their reaſon. But if a man is three times convicted of perjury, there are but few hopes of his amendment by letting him remain among his fellow creatures; therefore ſolitude will prevent him from doing any miſchief, and may call him to a knowledge and repentance of his ſin.

LAW.

Thou ſhalt not ſteal.

This relates to injuries done to the property of others, and reparation ſhall be made two-fold. But when the court ſhall think the offence requires further puniſhment it ſhall order the culprit into ſolitary confinement, for not longer than two months, unleſs by order of council, upon an application from the hundred court.

LAW.

Thou ſhalt not commit adultery.

God having made the human race, as well as the other animals, male and female; and having ordained that the early period of our lives ſhould be particularly feeble, and in want of the protection of our parents, it becomes neceſſary for the welfare of community, that proper care be taken by the ſtate to preſerve inviolate the honourable connection of matrimony.

Marriage conſiſts in the union of two perſons of different ſexes, whereby they give to each other an undi-

vided property in themſelves. The good of the world requires that theſe connections ſhould never be broken.

Adultery conſiſts in wilfully breaking a firſt connection by living in the ſame intimacy with another while the firſt choice is ſtill exiſting.

Both the parties convicted of adultery ſhall be committed to perpetual ſolitary confinement, which will oblige them to reflect on their ſin, and by inducing repentance, may enable them to obtain the forgiveneſs of Omnipotence. When ſentence is paſſed the marriage is *ipſo facto* diſſolved, and the free perſon is at liberty at the end of ſix months to marry again.

## L A W.

Thou ſhalt do no murder.

The man who has committed wilful murder has proved himſelf an improper perſon to be permitted to remain in ſociety, and has committed an injury which he can never repair. From God alone can he receive abſolution, which can only be obtained by that ſincere repentance and contrition, which a true ſenſe of the heinouſneſs of the offence, together with a belief in the mercies of God can only effect.

The murderer ſhall ſuffer amputation of his right hand; and be chained to the ground for the reſt of his days in ſolitary confinement; let him be furniſhed with ſuch books as may ſerve to call him to a ſenſe of the injury he has committed. Let him ſee nobody but the goaler, and the miniſter of the pariſh, who is requeſted occaſionally to viſit him, and to aſſiſt him with ſuch advice as may enable him, if poſſible, to make his peace with God.

In moſt other countries, murder is puniſhed with death, but the ſpirit of our laws is not to puniſh, but to amend. We do not think we have any right to kill; becauſe we cannot ſay whether God will accept death as an expiation; but we do hope, that upon a ſincere repentance, he will pardon—and this effect may be produced through ſolitude and ſelf-examination.

## L A W.

Thou ſhalt not injure thy neighbour in any of his poſſeſſions.

All injuries ſhall be repaired two-fold. Where this cannot be done, the offender ſhall be ſent to priſon for a certain time according to the opinion of the court, having reſpect to the extent of his offences.

Every magiſtrate has the power of ſending any offender to priſon till the ſetting of the next pariſh court; where the offence muſt be inveſtigated, and the puniſhment

declared. If any perſon knows himſelf injured he may appeal in the following order:

FROM THE PARISH COURT,
TO
THE HUNDRED;
TO
THE KING IN COUNCIL;
AND TO
THE PARLIAMENT.

But to prevent troubleſome appeals, it is ordained that any ſuperior court confirming the ſentence of an inferior, ſhall be at liberty to double the penalty.

If any magiſtrate acts maliciouſly, upon application to the Chancellor's Court, the injured will meet with redreſs.

*F I N I S.*

I Shall, perhaps, make another trip to Veritas before I come to England; if I do, I will acquaint myſelf with ſome further particulars of the cuſtoms of this iſland, of which I know you will be glad to be informed

I am,

Your ſincere Friend,

J. RICHARDSON.

## ERRATA.

Page 2,—Line 8—read Genius
3———12———Supreme
———20———Of the King and Parliament
9———12———were obliged
25———————The Te Deum ought to have preceded the Litany
54——laſt line——Civil Ceremonies
62——laſt line——ſhould be to reflect
76———21———add a Comma after, with it
91———16———in ſhort he alone, and dele the word alone in the next line
105———9———yet they believe that
109———16———divine aid
114———10———general
121———2———dele but
126———18———had given
128———7———the Feaſts
133———13———a fair Statement